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CHURCH PRINCIPLES

CONSIDERED

IN THEIR RESULTS.

BY

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Sequere viam Catholicæ disciplinæ, quæ ab ipso Christo per Apostolos ad nos usque manavit, et abhinc ad posteros manatura est.

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CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

Par.		Page
1— 4.	Of the true form of history, and of its materials	1
5— 8.	Periods of variation and reaction may be expected in religion, compatibly with the permanence of the Faith	5
9, 10.	We must not assume that all movement is progression	9
11—16.	The present age seems to be distinguished by two principal and opposite tendencies	11
17.	Illustrated from the Reformation	17
18.	From the late reaction in poetry	17
19, 20.	Presumable disadvantages of a period of religious reaction, from the nature of the thing	18
21, 22.	From faults of temperament	20
23.	From sinister observation	22
24, 25.	Remedial suggestions	23
26.	Particulars of the evil indicated	26
27.	Blame to what and whom chiefly ascribable	27
28.	The bearings of the question highly practical	27
29.	The subjects to be discussed	28
30.	The title	29
31.	The method of discussing them, not theological	30
32.	But ethical	30
33, 34.	And practical	32
35.	And without pretence of authority	34

CHAPTER II.

RATIONALISM.

1.	The antirationalistic principle	36
2— 4.	On the popular and the subtler form of rationalism	37

Par.		Page
5— 9.	The proper work of the understanding, and the limits of its province	40
10—17.	The understanding is incompetent to cure a fault which lies in the affections	46
18.	Though it has a collateral and instrumental influence	
19.	True statement of the question	52
20, 21.	Homogeneity a condition of the action of the affections	54
22.	Objection—why, then, do not belief and practice correspond?	56
23.	(1) Because the direct action of the affections may raise belief above practice. Instance	56
24.	(2) Because passion operates more on conduct than on belief	57
25.	(3) Because the understanding participates in the cognisance of the direct motives which bear upon religious belief and practice	58
26—33.	(4) Because the understanding participates in the cognisance of the indirect motives which bear upon religious belief and practice	59
34—37.	(5) Because the affections may be hindered and intercepted by the action of other faculties	65
38.	Need of some access to the man besides that which the understanding affords	68
39.	The degrees of incompetency of the understanding, taken alone, to appreciate the main religious motives	68
40.	(1) Fear of punishment	69
41.	(2) Hope of enjoyment	70
42.	(3) Love of God	70
43—45.	Argument from Scriptural instances with respect to the unbaptized	71
46.	Applied	73
47, 48.	Argument from Scriptural exhortations to the baptized	74
49—51.	The doctrine of a spiritual influence apart from the understanding, necessary for the maintenance of orthodoxy in general	76
52.	And most appropriately illustrated in the Sacraments	78
53.	Harmonious teaching of Scripture with respect to the heart and the understanding	79
54, 55.	Mode of its loss and recovery	80
56, 57.	Summary of principles and conclusions in this Chapter.	83

CHAPTER III.

THE CHURCH.

Par.		Page
	1. The principle of Christian life spiritual	85
2,	3. Seeks an external development, first, because we have a body as well as a soul	85
	4. Next, for its own consummation as an inward principle	86
	5. Next, because the law of duty binds each man to benefit his neighbour, and because human nature is social	87
	6. A great part of the province of common action is necessarily relative	87
7,	8. The principle of sociality requires to be regulated in its operation by fixed limits	88
	Which limits are best provided by some positive Divine institution	88
	9. And Christian religion ordains a system of joint action	89
	10. And the whole human life is socially constituted	96
	11. And all religions have provided for an external development	92
	12. Need of such a system from the external obstacles to Christianity	93
	13. From the internal obstructions	93
	14. Scope and worth of these presumptive arguments	94
	15. The general result: that right reason leads us to anticipate the doctrine of the Visible Church	95
16—19.	Of certain popular and lowered notions of the Church	95
	20. Not recognised by the Church of England	99
21—29.	Nor in Scripture; where the Christian religion is for the most part regarded collectively in the person of the Church, and the Church is represented as the subject of prophecy, of preaching, of parable, of prayer, as the inheritress of the promises, the body of Christ, and one	100
30, 31.	Objection, that the unity commanded is exclusively spiritual	107
32—37.	Objection, that the unity of the body is fulfilled in the distinction between Christians generally and the rest of the world	109

Par.		Page
38—40.	Objection that, from the mixture of good and bad in the Visible Church, it cannot be the Spiritual Spouse	113
41.	Outline of the result from Scripture, and our lapse from that standard	116
42.	Cause partly in the Romish excess	117
43, 45.	Partly also from human corruption	118
46.	Of the advantages of return	121
47.	Considered simply as a command	122
48.	It presents a different view and form of action	122
49—52.	The Scriptural idea tends to the depression of the idea of self	123
53.	To the growth of Love	127
54.	To increase of force by sympathy and by combination	128
55, 56.	To warmth of devotion	129
57.	Generally, to maintain the doctrines of grace, and to facilitate carrying out the details of duty	131
58—60.	Advantages of defence which it gives to the conscientious and obedient	132
61.	And of aggression	135
62—65.	Application to the charge of peculiar opinions	136
66, 67.	Tends to corroborate faith	139
68—71.	And to the maintenance of truth	141
72, 73.	All this is applicable primarily to the general and partially to each particular Church	145
74—82.	Answers to objections from supposed tendency	147
	(75, 76.) to lethargy and formality	147
	(77.) to obscure the view of the Redeemer	150
	(78, 79.) to self-righteousness	151
	(80.) to misrepresent the condition of the wicked	154
	(81, 82.) to enslave private judgment	155
83.	Conclusion	157

CHAPTER IV.

THE SACRAMENTS.

1.	Mode of treating	158
2, 3.	Scripture doctrine respecting Baptism	159
4.	Respecting the Eucharist	161
5.	Idea of this doctrine	162

Par.		Page
6, 7.	Ancient doctrine	163
8.	Two forms of modern perversion	165
9.	What is the practical difference?	165
10.	In faithful adults;	166
11.	In unfaithful adults;	166
12—14.	In infants;	167
15.	The Sacraments give a handle whereby the senses take hold of religion	169
16.	Afford a strong historical evidence of Christianity	170
17, 18.	Are the proper constituents of Christian fellowship	170
19.	Testimonies of St. Augustin and of Hooker	172
20.	And the proper means of realising consciousness of fellowship	173
21.	And make the strongest appeal to religious motives	174
22.	And are a barrier against fanaticism	174
23.	And against despondency and unbelief	175
24.	And exhibit men in their true position as recipients	176
25—31.	They peculiarly illustrate and defend the proper idea of spiritual grace; as it respects the Eucharist	177
32.	And as it respects Baptism	182
33.	And especially infant baptism	182
34.	Summary view	183
35—38.	Cases of the Romanists and of certain divisions of Protestants, compared	183
39—42.	Practical warning therefrom to follow the true middle way	186

CHAPTER V.

THE APOSTOLICAL SUCCESSION.

1, 2.	Mode of dealing with the subject proposed	189
3, 4.	Questions which arise respecting the ministry out of the foregoing conclusions	191
5, 6.	Opinion that the perpetuity of the Church is in the doctrine only	193
7— 9.	A society as such implies a government	194
10—12.	Particularly Sacramental ordinances seem to require a specific ministerial agency	196
13—15.	The Church and its government historically constituted in the persons of the Apostles	200

Par.		Page
16.	Their office was perpetual	204
17.	And the Ministry in general was exercised (where not by Divine Revelation) by commission from them	205
18—20.	According to the nature of the office as testified by Scripture	206
21—26.	Illustrated by consideration of particular cases mentioned in Scripture	209
27.	From the evidence of St. Clement	214
28—33.	Succession in the Church contrasted with that in the State	216
34.	Misapprehensions of the points at issue	223
35.	The question twofold	223
36—38.	Its theological and practical importance	224
39.	Various theories concerning the channel of the Succession: the Church of England holds it to be the Episcopate	227
40.	Essentials to the office of a Bishop	229
41.	Scriptural traces of it in the Apostles	229
42.	In the charge of St. James at Jerusalem	230
43.	In Timothy and Titus	230
44.	In the Angels of the Apocalypse	232
45.	In fragmentary notices of other persons	232
46.	The historical evidence at large classified	233
47—49.	On Chillingworth's objection from the doctrine of chances	234
50.	Changes in the use of the terms by which Church offices were designated	237
51.	Relation of the Church to the Jewish polity	237
52, 53.	General view from Scripture of the development of the ministry	238
54.	And of the natural limit of the Scriptural records	240
55, 56.	Why it properly takes the form rather of narrative than of precept	240
57—59.	Independently of the investigation of early history, a distinct question arises, whether it be granted that the early Presbyters had the Episcopal power of order, any conclusion can thence be drawn in favour of later Presbyters to whom it has not been given	243
60.	Misapprehension of the issue between Episcopal and Non-episcopal communions	246

Par.		Page
61.	Testimony of the Church of England	247
62.	Of Bishop Hoadly	249
63.	Scope of these inquiries	250
64.	Retrospect, and the course of the remaining arguments proposed	251
65, 66.	Two prefatory cautions	251
67, 68.	The tendencies of the doctrine of Succession as it respects the general expediency of a clerical order	254
69—75.	As it respects the clergy, from the case of St. Paul, from reason, and from experience	257
76, 77.	As it respects the relation of governors and people in the Church	266
78—80.	As it respects individual members of the Church	269
81—87.	As it respects the general ideas of spiritual grace and of the visible Church	272
88, 89.	Conclusion	279

CHAPTER VI.

OF THE SPECIFIC CLAIM OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

1— 3.	View of the discrepancy between the true theory of the Church and the actual religious condition of the country	282
4.	The question to be discussed: is the Church of England invested, within her own sphere, with Catholic prerogatives?	285
5, 6.	It has a material bearing upon the question of legal establishment	286
7, 8.	Has the Church any general ground of her belief which those dissenting from her have not?	288
9.	If she has, she stands in an essentially different position	289
10.	Her historical rights	290
11.	Proper object of religious search	291
12, 13.	Duty of remaining in the communion of the Church	292
14, 15.	Nominal adherence to Apostolic Faith and Scripture may easily be rendered null	294
16—19.	Presumption in favour of the Dissenter as compared with the Deist, from the existence of Scripture	296
20—27.	Analogous presumption in favour of the Church as compared with the Dissenter, from the historical and exegetical witness of Christian antiquity	299

Par.		Page
28.	The argument with Romanism is separate	305
29.	Question on the historical identity of the Church	306
30, 31.	Identity unbroken before the Reformation	307
32.	Much more then, at the Reformation, *quoad* doctrine	308
33—37.	Nor is it broken *quoad* succession	309
38.	She therefore holds locally the rights and claims of the Apostolic Church	313

CHAPTER VII.

CHURCH PRINCIPLES IN RELATION TO PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES.

SECTION I.—*Introductory.*

1.	Summary of conclusions from the foregoing Chapters	314
2.	Objections to them from consequences; I., II., III.	314
3.	Such an issue is subordinate only	315
4.	What is here meant by the phrase "Church Principles"	316
5.	They are unjustly classed with opinions in religion, which are properly private and indifferent notions	317
6.	Because they are held by the Church	319
7.	And are found in the writings of her Divines, and are imputed by her opponents	320

SECTION II.—*First Objection.*

8—10.	Objection I. That Church principles have a tendency to Romanism. This objection is *primâ facie* of very equivocal merit, from our experience of its use, and from the mixed nature of Romanism	322
11.	Yet it may have some of the elements of truth	326
12.	The specific operation of Church principles is not favourable to Romanism	327
13.	But they establish certain grounds of sympathy with (among others) the Roman Churches—namely, in	329
14.	(1.) The fact of Church essence	330
15.	(2.) The power of Church principles	331
16.	(3.) The recognition of permanent objective truth in religion	332
17—19.	(4.) The principle of provision by symbols in religion for our corporeal nature	334
20, 21.	Of the aggressions of Romanism outwards, and of its terrors within	338

Par.		Page
22.	Retrogression of the Reformation in the decline of the 16th century	341
23.	Moral of Church history, and a rule of its study	342
24.	Reconversion of England ardently desired	343
25.	And not now for the first time anticipated	344
26.	Humanly speaking, hopeless	346
27, 28.	There is a yet worse, which is also a less improbable alternative	347
29.	Special causes of weakness in the Roman Church	348
30.	(1.) Tendency of some of its doctrines to the extreme forms of superstitious error	348
31, 32.	Examples	350
33.	Reverence to the Virgin, liable to become idolatrous	353
34, 35.	Its idea fascinating, but most perilous and delusive	355
36.	This is the kind of weakness which the present age is likely to detect	358
37.	The influences of Romanism in their decay leave behind no substitute	358
38.	It does not powerfully pervade the intellectual and the national life, where it is paramount	359
39.	In Northern Germany more vigorous, and why	360
40, 41.	(2.) Variations of Romanism : on indulgencies	361
42—45.	On the circulation of Scripture among the people	363
46, 47.	On toleration and religious equality	367
48.	The moral versatility thus evinced is really a special cause of weakness	370
49.	The English Reformation, as tested by its results on the national destinies, is open on certain points to animadversion	372
50.	A National Church is mainly responsible for the condition of the country where it exists	373
51.	The same test, however, must be applied to the competing scheme of Romanism	374
52.	And in the country whose case is most nearly analogous—namely, France	374
53—66.	Comparison in detail, unfavourable to Romanism	375
67—70.	Church Principles the specific barrier against Romanism	389
71, 72.	Additional safeguard in some peculiarities marking the conduct of many persons in the Roman communion	394

Par.		Page
73.	General lesson we have to learn from Romanism .	396
74, 75.	The difficulty of applying a right spirit to the discussion	398
	Section III.—*Second Objection.*	
76.	Objection II. That Church principles place us in a false and uncharitable position as regards other Protestants: and the propositions to be established in reply	400
77— 80.	I. That the matter of the doctrines cannot possibly be arrogant if they be true	401
	II. That their proper tendency is to produce not arrogance but humility	403
81— 83.	III. That they purport to invest with Church privileges sixfold more than they are charged with "unchurching"	405
84, 85.	Many non-episcopal Protestants hold opinions equally liable to the accusation of "unchurching" other Protestants	408
86— 92.	IV. That Church Principles go to exclude no person of piety from the Church of Christ, who, according to the criteria established by his own professed opinions, belongs to it . . .	410
93— 98.	Holy persons are individually united to the Church by inward conformity; and even their societies, as distinct from the persons composing them, may possibly be portions of the visible Church; but we want evidence to affirm it . . .	416
99—105.	Nor do these admissions impair the obligation to adhere to the Apostolical ministry, or annul its advantages	423
106.	Summary on the fourth proposition . . .	429
107—110.	Unconscious attestation to the truth of Church principles from those who smart under their imputed consequences	430
	Section IV.—*Third Objection.*	
111.	Objection III. That Church principles tend to divide the Church	434
112—114.	Answered generally as respects schism . .	435
115.	As respects divisions in opinion . . .	437

Par.		Page
116.	These principles refer us to an acknowledged and a common standard	437
117, 118.	They limit and soften differences of opinion	439
119.	Discussion of their bearing as learned historically from the period since 1688. Effects of the Revolution unfavourable to these principles	441
120—126.	Causes specified	442
127.	Decline in general doctrine attended the decline in Church principles	447
128.	Though the essence of the Church remained entire	448
129.	Notices of decay and corruption in the Church elsewhere and at former periods	448
130.	Facts illustrative of the decay of Church principles during the 18th century	450
131.	On the corresponding decay of general doctrine	452
132—134.	Testimonies to it	453
135, 136.	Instances of it	457
137.	Reasons for a free statement of this declension	459
138.	Contemporaneous decay of learning and study in the Church	460
139, 140.	Instances of prevailing secularity	462
141.	Schism	464
142.	Morals of the rich	465
143.	Reaction, first in the doctrines relating to personal religion	466
144.	With exaggerations	468
145.	Which have gradually disappeared as their influence widened	469
146.	Reaction next in the deeper study and stronger inculcation of Church principles, which are the natural complement of the doctrines relating to personal religion	470
147.	Fictitious doctrinal oppositions which were in vogue	471
148, 149.	Now less and less prevalent	471
150.	The order of reaction exactly reverses that of decline	473
151.	This, like the former reaction, may have some temporary exaggerations	473
152.	But, like that, is not innovation	475
153.	And accordingly makes rapid and steady progress	476
154.	Herewith learning revives	477

Par. Page

155—158. The substantial and final tendency of these discussions is towards the confirmation of unity in the Church 477

159—166. Illustrations from the controversy in Scotland concerning settlement of ministers, of a great practical difficulty arising from the want of the Episcopal succession 482

SECTION V.— *General View.*

167—170. Three conditions requisite for the general efficacy of Christianity 493

(I.) Permanence of the Faith . . . 494

(II.) Comprehensiveness of Communion . 495

(III.) Liberty of Thought 496

171. (I.) How realised in the Church . . . 497

172, 173. The same of (II.) 499

174, 175. The same of (III.) 501

176—178. Idea and position of the Church of England eminently favourable to the general object of union, which, however difficult, is not in all degrees absolutely hopeless 504

179, 180. Even as regards portions of the Roman Communion 509

181. Wherein the peculiar strength of Romanism and of Protestantism severally lies 511

182, 183. There is no reason why they should not be combined, nor anything in the Church of England to disqualify her from fully combining them . 512

184. A general sentiment of the necessity for religious union is growing among serious persons . . 514

185, 186. Which cannot be realised by inward feelings alone, or by common reception of the canon of Scripture, but only by oneness of communion . . 515

187. The apparent ripening of things for a crisis . . 517

188—193. How to await it, holding by the law of truth and by the law of love; and of the relation between these laws 518

194, 195. Of the difficulty of access to Divine Truth, and of the value and dignity of the pursuit . . 524

196. Anticipations for the Church of England . . 527

APPENDIX 529

CHURCH PRINCIPLES

CONSIDERED

IN THEIR RESULTS.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

1—4. True form of History. 5—8. Variation and reaction in religion. 9, 10. Movement not necessarily progressive. 11—28. Characteristics of this period as one of religious reaction; the evils and their remedies. 29—35. Enumeration of the subjects to be discussed; and the mode of handling them.

1. If it be expedient to note the forms of thought and action by which successive ages are distinguished as they pass by us, and thus to supply the materials of a larger retrospect and of more comprehensive and permanent records, it can scarcely be a task requiring much apology, to consider the bearings of particular truths of religion with respect to the shifting circumstances of the world from time to time, and to the different degrees and modes in which those truths are apprehended. That which we familiarly call the history of men, is not their history. It is a part indeed of their history, but not the most important and essential part. We should think it strange, and might be tempted to complain of it as either a gross error

or a fraud, if an account of some of the less important classes of material objects should monopolise or even assume the title of natural history. It is not less at variance with the true nature of things, though more in conformity with our habitual but erroneous conceptions, that relations, which are only secondary with respect to the most momentous interests of man, and the highest parts of his nature, should, by a semblance of common consent, be considered the history of man. There is fraud in this case, but the fraud is in ourselves, in each of us, in the depravation of the inward eye, which misrepresents the comparative magnitude of objects, and gives to the things which are seen, a greater importance than to those which are not seen.

2. Secular history explains to us much of what concerns the bodily and temporal interests of man: his social position and the results upon character arising out of it, much of his experimental life in the senses, in the imagination, in the understanding, and even in the affections. It ought to go, and in right hands it does go, much farther. The true historian interprets and combines its separate phenomena, by constant reference to the central influence which controls all the movements of human nature; the principle of religion. Yet, for a long time, and until very recently, the mind of our country has been fed with its knowledge of the past, from works which are altogether defective on this vital subject; and it will probably be long before our habits are so reformed as

that we shall read history only in the light of revelation. But what aspect of the character of the creature is entitled to compete for a moment with that in which he is viewed by the Creator? To the rescued child of Adam what so vital as the great subject of his redemption? To the human being, who, if he is to live permanently, must live by a new life, what matter the concerns and the history of the former state, except in an instrumental and subordinate capacity? We ought indeed to be on our guard against that morbid teaching, which inculcates an universal recoil from earthly objects as the true law of general morality; which treats this life on earth as if it were a mere accident of our being: and perceives nothing but empty vision in all its impressive and pregnant experience. On the contrary, it is an ordained and necessary part of the development of man: and when its regulation is committed to right laws, it is in harmony much more than in opposition to the future and untroubled existence, which awaits the faithful members of Christ. But still it remains true, that, great as is the importance of our civil and social life, it is not an essential but an instrumental importance: it is important for that which it yields and generates, not for that which it is; and all its influences are real and of weight, only when we take into calculation something that lies without it and beyond it.

3. It is in the history of the Church that we have the final consummation of all human destinies. Whatever we are, or have, or do, is important, at least is

beneficially important, only in connexion with the religious bearing of our lives. Every gift and ornament of the human character is either pernicious, or useless, or at best fragile and unenduring, unless it be sanctified and stamped with permanence by a vital union with the spirit of religion. Every form of loveliness, which belongs to this world alone, must pass away with it; and the beautiful and graceful things we idolize are but like the fillets that once bound the temples of the sacrificial victim, unless we obtain for them a passport to the better world, by applying to them that perpetuating power of religion, which, blending these lighter with the higher and holier qualities, rescues them from abuse; and, removing them from their dedication to the purposes of pride and selfishness, appoints them to serve God each according to its capacity.

Thus, from being mischievous, do temporal gifts and talents become valuable. They are estimated indeed only at their proper worth, but in that measure they are blessed by God, and acceptable to Him. The common tenor of daily life affords not to the philosophical and sagacious mind alone, but to any man who will look for them, continual occasions for the exercise of duty, though often upon a subject matter apparently unconnected with it: purity, integrity, courage, patience, diligence, self-command, may be fed and strengthened amid the humblest labours of each succeeding hour, though of course it is in the acts of direct duty or worship that the mental powers

and affections have their highest honour and reward; and so the whole circle of human experience is chiefly to be viewed with reference to its religious results. Our relations to Godward are those which should occupy the largest share in our attention, as they will exercise the most determining influence on our destiny, and these are they which compose the history of the Church; for it is in the Church that we have our religious life, derived to us not as individuals, but by virtue of incorporation into her body. In her alone the world is loved, and in her, for the sake of her head, the Redeemer.

4. Further, as secular history will in the natural course of things be gathered from contemporary observations, first recorded with the advantages of proximity, and then reduced into order with those of comprehensive and impartial contemplation: so, in the history of religion, we ought merely to consider not only the records of the past, with which our concern is comparatively remote, but also those peculiarities and variations which are actually beneath our eye, which belong to the circumstances and persons of our own time, and by which perhaps in more than trifling particulars the forms of our own belief, and thus of our own character, are determined. And the habit of observation which should arrest and embody some of the religious characteristics of the period as they rise or ripen or decline, and the pen which should record them with fidelity, might be found to render useful service to truth.

5. It may possibly be objected that these remarks

tend towards the error of those who treat religion as being in its essential as well as its minor parts a progressive science, not only capable of extension in its store of facts and in its secondary laws, but also liable to fundamental change in its fundamental principles. Certainly I would deny the subjective immobility of any religious system. The Roman Church, whatever may have been said of it by some among its extreme foes or friends, is not one at all times, nor in all places at one time. Those communities which admit the ultimate right of private judgment may be regarded as still more exposed to fluctuation; but the English Church, in recognising along with, though subordinately to, the Scriptures, the authorised interpretations of primitive Christian antiquity, appears to proceed upon the principle that the Church of Christ has an infallibility in some fixed body of truth, and as a necessary consequence of that infallibility, changelessness in the profession of the truth so held. But as, however, there are fallings away from essential truth, and as this perpetuity is not absolutely assured to any particular portion of the Church, so there are also changes silent and unperceived, originating in some secret tendency, some collateral circumstance, or some apparently trivial enactment; and which, even where they do not touch the vital parts of religion, may nevertheless, in a thousand different degrees, have materially influential consequences in marring or cherishing its growth, in obstructing or facilitating its operation.

6. But it may fairly be required of those who hold

strong views upon the fundamental immutability of Christian truth, that they should be very explicit in stating the extent of the object contemplated, when they come forward avowedly not for the sole purpose of enforcing what is already acknowledged, but likewise with the endeavour to reanimate the perception of some things which have been neglected, or even for a time denied. They may be required to show whether in any and in what sense they hold the theory of progression in religion; and whether, or under what limitations, they mean to leave room for the inference, that they would make the propositions they maintain conditions of Christian union.

7. Along with the changelessness then of the Church in the fundamental truths of the Gospel, let us observe that there is ample space for capricious variation in the methods by which those truths are followed out to their consequences, or combined with one another, or with minor truths. It is therefore no reproach to religion that her external aspect on earth, and even certain of the modifications of her internal character, should perpetually appear to be undergoing alteration. First, because she has little or no practical hold on the hearts of most of those whose opinions nevertheless count in the mass, and contribute to form the fashion of the day. Next, because when we consider what is divine truth on the one hand, and what the human nature, its depository, on the other, we see that the true cause for wonder is in the conservation of the essence, and not in the hazards, the assaults, the

superficial shiftings to which it is exposed; for there is a continually deteriorating influence at work in the heart upon the truth, which is planted there as exotic and not indigenous; and even when we omit the spirit of absolute rebellion within us which aims at its extinction, yet still the faintness, the indifference, the backslidings, the immeasurable distance between its heavenly and our fallen nature—these surely are reasons enough to account for the fact that the subjective development of that truth in man, imperfect in the best ("for now we see through a glass darkly"*), likewise exhibits, in the thousand differing phases of character, a thousand progressive degrees of imperfection.

8. The ship retains her anchorage yet drifts within a certain range, subject to the wind and tide. So we have for an anchorage the cardinal truths of the Gospel determined by the consent of the Church in all ages, and nowhere more fully or simply recognised than in this island. One who speaks to his brethren in her communion, under the peculiar circumstances of the day, should simply wish to be a fellow-labourer with them, and that all should be mutually helpful in realising to the hearts of its members the full force of its truths. For the progress of truth through the character is slow, and it requires time for its full establishment, long after it has been sincerely and vitally received. It is a task of common interest, to learn better the lesson we must all feel that we have so im-

* 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

perfectly acquired, namely, that which shows how we may least inadequately fulfil all the conditions of that blessed and glorious life which we have in Jesus Christ, and how most effectually oppose its powers to the powers of the fallen and evil life that belongs to our own selves.

9. Now this may be done partly upon a principle of general progression in the Church; for it might be that the Church should grow, in certain kinds at least of knowledge, and yet retain all her essential principles without change, as an oak unfolds the life which it has carried seminally within it from the acorn. As the treasures both of spiritual experience and intellectual acquirement are accumulated by the labours of successive generations, it may be said we have more assistance, and ought therefore to make more progress. In short, *a priori*, a case might perhaps be made to show that while the spirit of the Church must ever remain the same, the mind of the Church might be from age to age continually strengthened and matured and enlarged. Let those, however, who see that such has been actually the fact, declare it: I see it not, and therefore dare not assert it. And perhaps we do not enough consider that a spirit more simple and an understanding less practised, are often preferable to that state in which a limited possession of knowledge has engendered an unlimited presumption of knowledge; and that not merely the absolute but also the relative state of the heart and the mind determine the true condition of the man, and of the Church.

10. Let us take, for example, that which we com-

monly and proudly term the dark period of the thirteenth century. Assume, on the one hand, as much as you will respecting the superior standard of average attainment among men, in knowledge and religion at the present day: still I say the balance is not wholly cast in our favour. It was a strong expression, I think of the late Mr. Irving, that the soil of the Christian Church had more vigour at the time when it was capable of throwing up such plants as the minds of Luther and Melancthon, than warms it at this moment. And so I would say of the darker period of this thirteenth century. Look at the minds of the men, for example at the mind of Dante,* which it moulded. Regard the comprehensive grasp with which he seized the seen and the unseen world, the entire range of ideas and facts, even the possible or imaginary forms of our future existence; and while interweaving typically with his bold creations the great events and interests of his time,† exhibited along with a richness of fancy and a depth of passion in which he has had few poets for his rivals, an understanding edged for analysis like Aristotle, a spirit of childlike and ecstatic devotion like Augustine or Thomas à Kempis, and a strength of sublime intuition, that highest of human faculties, in which he seems to stand alone. Shall we, can we see again any such form and fashion of a man? Are there the mate-

* Another remarkable instance may be found in Roger Bacon, the Franciscan monk, educated at Oxford (see Whewell's Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences, i. 323); and a third in Thomas Aquinas.

† See the ingenious but exaggerated theory of the work of Professor Rossetti, "Sullo spirito antipapale."

rials for feeding and for training such a spirit? Among our foot-prints will there be found by posterity

una simile
Orma di piè mortale?*

His works are like the huge spears and swords that are shown in some of our old baronial castles, which none can wield; and if the gigantic physical stature of ancient times be fabulous, is it equally untrue that the higher ranges of intellect, according to the prediction of Lord Bacon, have been reduced, and that our modern pride must begin to suspect and qualify some of its claims to superior excellence?

11. It may not improbably be the case that, so far as respects religion, we are actually progressing in some particulars while we retrograde in others. The Church may be engaged in developing the ideas which she possesses, and in bringing the bud to be the flower; or she may be, on the other hand, condensing what has been too much rarefied in a heated atmosphere, directing its power to a definite and palpable object, and seeking, through compression, to attain a more energetic action. She may be imploring her members to look into their own convictions, and to examine faithfully whether they do not either comprise, or imply, or loudly call in aid those ideas which it is her desire to exhibit; whether they be not seminally there contained, or whether they be not by consistency of reasoning involved, or whether they be not

* Manzoni's Ode on the Death of Napoleon.

urgently needed to give form and body, completeness, unity, permanence, to the deep principles of personal religion which those whom she addresses bear in their heart of hearts, and for which they are justly and reasonably jealous.

12. We are not led to suppose that those who first followed Christ on earth, or even those who first joined his Church after his death, in the early stages of its progress and before heresy was rife, adopted any great number of propositions intellectually canvassed, apprehended, understood, before they became joined in the sacred unity of the Lord's mystical body. But being so joined, they had a guarantee that, as they advanced into a deeper knowledge of the things of God, with enlarging knowledge they should still have a coextensive unity, unless indeed the heart grew gross with pride, and brought forth its evil fruits, division and error. For the truths of religion being certain and unchangeable, they afford as unexceptionably true a ground of unity to those who know most as to those who know least, and it is the evil nature alone within us which has multiplied heresies upon the earth under pretence of knowledge. They therefore who hold from the Church of England their views of the truths of Scripture, and believe that in her they have a faithful expositress of the truths of Catholic Christianity, though they may not have travelled over the entire cycle of those truths together, yet if they have the same love and the same desire, the same belief in the great doctrines which she teaches, and in her faithful-

ness as a portion of the true Church, they may set out to examine more closely both her and them, in the hope, as well as with the prayer, that they may be enabled thus to advance, without any breach of their present concord, towards ascertaining the adaptation of the entire Gospel to the entire character of man.

13. Together with the experimental fact that there have been in each particular age particular modifications in the features of Christian creed and practice, we may perhaps be warranted in assuming that the age in which we live is peculiarly marked as a religious crisis. It is distinguished by a spirit of inquiry, not laborious but superficial, not friendly to its subject, but sceptical. This is its prominent character for evil; but, upon the other hand, it has also its tokens for good. From the same combination of circumstances, which has engendered that spirit of jealous and querulous curiosity, has arisen a counteracting temper of earnest zeal against precipitate innovation. We succeed a series of generations through which the most valuable institutions were allowed to slumber and decay. We belong to a generation apt to censure its predecessors, perhaps for the very reason that we are suffering from the absence of that moral training which we ought to have received from a due and prudent use of those institutions; we are awakened by exciting events to a keener sense of the faculties within us, while a right diet for those faculties and the sobering influences of habit and of inheritance are wanting; we are almost unanimous in calling for

something more than the more tranquil times and habits of our immediate ancestors required; but while some seek to supply their need out of the resources which the human understanding commands, others look rather to a traditional than to an ideal type, and are deeply impressed with the conviction that in the oldest way of faith alone are truth and peace to be found; with the anxiety to keep their fellow-men within those sacred limits which have been marked and blessed by God himself, and with the desire so to adjust the instruments of their labour as may best subserve this final purpose.

14. Thus while the men of this age are divided principally into two great classes which divaricate widely in the direction of their desires, they nevertheless have for the most part one characteristic in common. They who think that in ancient Christianity is to be found the great and only conservative principle for modern society, are likewise of the belief, that in order to find it we must look not to the common and customary opinion of the generation or generations immediately preceding us, but to the results of a larger experience: and especially to a period of clearer and better knowledge, all whose fundamental principles are happily transmitted to us in the treasures of Scripture, as they have been attested by the witness of the Church. They agree therefore with their antagonists in thinking, that the stores of the last age are not enough to meet the wants of the present. The great question depending is, whether

we are to revert in matters of religion to older positions than those which were recently fashionable, or whether we are free to construct at our discretion some scheme founded upon novel principles. But upon either hypothesis we have a great transition to make. They who, with what is strictly termed the spirit of the age, wage war against religious doctrine in general, and they who wish to infuse into the prevailing religious tone of the last age a vitality which must be fetched from a greater distance, are each of them undertaking a great labour, are each of them experimenting on a large scale, though with very different guarantees and most opposite anticipations, for the one class expects felicity from securing to human will an uncontrolled domination, while the other considers that it is only to be found in a patient and submissive spirit, assuming the line of ancient and positive revelation as the only competent guide of its future progress.

15. But at all events it appears that we are alike making a great transition; and that transition is necessarily attended with excitement; and that excitement, operating upon many individual minds, is likely to produce numerous variations in the views which they adopt. On the one hand, it is conceived that the Church of England has in her theory, and has had in the practice of her best men and days, an exemplification of Christianity harmonising to a rare extent with its original and uncontaminated spirit;—that this spirit had, during the course of the last century, well

nigh escaped from the prevailing tone of opinion, and from a great portion of her ostensible public agency; —that those who first saw and mourned for the evil either, on the one hand, had not courage fully to expose it, or, on the other, in attempting to revive a devoted and active spirit, brought in along therewith much "hay, straw, wood, and stubble," much leaven of human invention and caprice, mingling with, and deteriorating, the sincere truth of the Gospel. How should it be otherwise? How can a creature so frail as man combine vastness with accuracy or energy with caution?

16. When a nation is returning from one form of religious temper to another, it is not like laying down something from the hand and taking another something into the hand; but it is parting with that which has become a portion of its very self, and seeking to acquire in its stead what is in turn to be so moulded and assimilated as to become a portion of its very self. The agent is too much mixed up with the act to allow of that perfect self-possession which is necessary for nice exactitude and for immediate and entire success. Coming back to a more vital and energetic religion, it either comes while yet under a portion of the sinister influences attending that degenerate form from which it has emerged, or if by some violent and almost preternatural effort it has thrown them off, then the mere violence of that effort produces a derangement in temper and habit of another kind, so that in all cases of great mental change we must expect to find more

or less of perturbation and consequent weakness. It was so at the Reformation, which in its troubling of the stagnant waters cast up to the surface the unhealthful product, first of the excesses of the Anabaptists, then of the Socinian heresy, as well as of other less glaring errors. And at this period we also, in our measure, must look for similar growths. In a greater or a less degree, an inventive will ever be substituted for a restorative process. Even if the principle be to revive what is ancient, yet indolence, caprice, precipitancy, will often forge some easy novelty in its stead.

17. The period of the Reformation has been referred to, and it may properly be remarked, that the Protestants are reproached in nothing by their antagonists more than in their variations, which have been detailed with triumph, and with great power and perspicuity, in the work of Bossuet bearing that title. But the responsibility of such variations as he has detailed is rather chargeable in equity on the accumulators of the corrupt mass which they had thrown off, than on themselves. Time was needful to separate effectually the precious from the vile. So many points were to be canvassed that no human steadiness of mind, nor any gift short of a miraculous aid from above, could avoid occasional error. And so our own age, in experiencing what is termed, somewhat hazardously and loosely, a *revival* of religion, must be expected to display much of hesitation, of defect, and of incongruity, while upon its road to the ameliorations it desires.

18. I do not think it is irrelevant to observe, that in

that revival of poetry, which the last generation has witnessed, there have been phenomena somewhat similar to those perceptible in the religion of the day. Some of the famous poets of the century, though reverting from unsound principles to sound ones, have marred in a greater or less degree an operation legitimate in the main and needful, by some imputed exaggeration of theory or practice. The great restorers of the art have themselves been more or less at variance upon its principles. The doctrine of Mr. Wordsworth respecting the dependence of poetry on actual nature, vividly and wonderfully as it is illustrated in his works, has appeared to Mr. Coleridge to require qualification; and has, whether justly or unjustly, retarded the extension of the wholesome and elevating influences of his poetry, and the acknowledgment of that debt of gratitude which he has laid upon his country and the world. But I quote from another source words full of genius and of wisdom, which bear on this point. "With the close of the last century came an era of reaction, an era of painful struggle, to bring our over-civilised condition of thought into union with the fresh productive spirit that brightened the morning of our literature. But repentance is unlike innocence: the laborious endeavour to restore has more complicated methods of action than the freedom of untainted nature."*

19. As however the religious change by which this

* Review of Tennyson's Poems in the Englishman's Magazine.

country has of late years been visited, has been gradual and mitigated in its progress, and softened by the characters and steady exertions of many impartial men, now propelling and now resisting, as either the accelerating or the inert force might appear to be in excess —so the evils with which it has been attended have been probably in a much greater degree negative than positive: if we are blind to certain wants in our condition, we are not exasperated against those who feel and expose them, nor so obstinately attached to those precise forms of religious teaching which may have been recently most popular, as obstinately to close the ear against the suggestion of any correction which may tend to bring them more into harmony with the full scope and spirit of the Gospel.

20. As Lazarus at his resurrection came forth bound in his grave clothes, so we may expect that at all periods of religious revival, upon the universal principles of human nature, those who are the providential instruments of the change will go forth to their work bearing with them some sign or relic of the state from which they have escaped; whether it be an adhesive remnant of former prejudices, or an exaggerated revulsion from them. They will mix with the work of God the frailties of man. They will naturally and laudably direct a special anxiety to those portions of Divine truth which they conceive to have most lain in neglect and desuetude; and this tendency will often run into excess, so that they will give to those, as it were, exhumed verities, a degree of weight and prominence

beyond that, which they possess in the scripturally adjusted system of Christian doctrine. Upon the other hand, they will be apt to entertain a feeling which partakes, though unconsciously, of resentment against those portions of truth which have been enjoying an undue and exclusive attention; upon them will be visited the fault of those who have handled them amiss; as if an article monopolised were like a moral agent and responsible for the actions of the monopolist. There will be then a disposition, more or less controlled, to depreciate the received truths, or to confound them with errors to which at first sight they may have a resemblance: first to misapprehend them, and then to condemn them in virtue and through the effects of that misapprehension.

21. With these difficulties and detriments in respect of the things themselves, there will be others, perhaps more serious, in respect of the agents. For those engaged in the movement will have their besetting sins of precipitancy and inconsiderateness, perhaps of violence and vanity. And those who dread the movement from timidity, or from indifference to the vitality of religion, or from interest and selfishness, will bring all these vices to the work of resistance; while at the same time there will be engaged in that work allies of a very different character, particularly honesty and prudence, which must always feel a presumptive jealousy of sudden and extensive change. From the collision of these antagonist qualities will be raised a cloud, as from the tramp of charging cavalry, which

involves in obscurity the objects of dispute; and the very uncertainties and misunderstandings, which teach temperate men the necessity of delay and investigation, do but the more keenly urge intemperate men to strike at haphazard, too often careless whom they may wound or what they may deface. Such has been in great measure the kind of controversy which has been in former years carried on, with national obstinacy, between parties in our Church. Notwithstanding the recognition of a common foundation, firstly in Scripture, and secondly, in the creeds and formularies which we all acknowledge as a basis for the interpretation of Scripture, we have seen writers discussing questions such as that of baptism, with apparently no view paramount to that of widening to the uttermost, by every unfavourable interpretation and under cover too often of great theological ignorance, the distance by which they were apparently separated. It is often under the guise of a regard for truth that this disposition insinuates itself into the heart. We persuade ourselves that we are only dragging error from its lair, when in fact we are creating it in order to condemn it; a process, that might indeed seem innocent if it were purely abstract, but here with the doctrine imputed, we involve in the charge a brother of like frailty with ourselves, capable of becoming by gentle usage a co-operating instrument, capable also of being exasperated into real and effective hostility.

22. Further, it is difficult for those who have been ardently employed in restoring parts of religion, to

acquire, after long exercise in that function, the opposite mental habit of regarding it as a whole; of considering how particular portions are shaded and softened by the juxta-position of others. There is in religion something analogous to that which is termed effect in a picture: where so much of the final tone of colouring must be reserved until the completion of the parts, and then adjusted for each individual figure by a calculation of the complex result about to arise out of the entire combination. Now in Christianity, doctrine, and ordinance, and precept are most exactly blended; but it is easy for human inadvertence or prejudice to untie the threefold cord, and to behold them as incapable of just assortment, *because* they are seen apart, and not in that position of contiguity and intermixture which the Divine will assigned to them. How difficult is it for those, who would bring forward into light that one of the three which may have been overlooked or inadequately appreciated, to fix its position with a due and constant reference to the complexity of its relations, both to the being on whom it is intended to operate, and to the other portions of the scheme of which it is to form a part.

23. While, in these periods of religious transition, we must anticipate that controversies will arise; we have also to apprehend that they will be more and more embroiled by the flippant and inauspicious intervention of those, who animadvert upon the bitterness too often attending theological discussion, apparently with no other view than to dispose of the evil

by substituting a scornful indifference to the subject. For the temporary fever to which life in proportion to its very energy is liable, they have no other cure than death. But why has theological controversy been bitter? Why, but because men have seen and felt the incalculable value of the objects with which it deals. And thus perhaps few kinds of dispute have been more acrimonious than those which are exhibited in the history of politics: because few subjects come more nearly home to our hearts and our characters; and because unhappily it is one of the proofs and symptoms of our depravity, that upon any given subject our passions are ready to be excited in proportion as our substantial interests are involved. This fact, however, does not justify the temper for which it may fairly be said to account. The question is, where a remedy is to be sought. Not, let us entreat, in a depreciation of that truth which is inestimable for its practical effects; but in the use of those appointed means for subduing and governing the temper, which afford to the Christian the only guarantee of the ultimate subjugation of inward as well as outward foes.

24. If, however, there be certain evils which peculiarly beset the time when religious emotion, already widely and sympathetically spread, is progressively extending its range, there are also means by which they may be susceptible of mitigation. The source and the terminating point of those evils is in self. It is in the tendency of men, however unacknowledged,

to claim infallibility as individuals or as a party; to view as having been created by us that of which we are in fact the mere recipients; to substitute for ancient and authorised bonds of union others which are new and unrecognised, but which, as framed by our own will, are calculated to gratify the spirit of self-worship. From the disease we learn the remedy. It must be sought in a special solicitude to cling to every principle and usage which depreciates the relative importance of self; and this, be it remembered, not only by a verbal ascription of all honour and of all effectual agency to God. This may often become a mere snare of our great enemy: if, allowing that God is the originator of everything good, we nevertheless claim His sanction for all that we may choose to attribute to Him. Self-love may operate as destructively under the notion that good things come specially *through* us, as under the more evidently mischievous opinion that they come originally *from* us. We must all therefore be ready, nor only ready but anxious, "in honour to prefer one another," by recognising a divine agency through the instrumentality of others, as freely and fairly, as some may earnestly hope that a portion of it might be conveyed through themselves.

25. But further and more specifically I should look for such mitigation of the evils thus attaching to our present condition, from a steady resolution to establish in the mind, by God's help, and to keep constantly in view, the essential principle, that in whatever we pro-

pose we look not to change, properly so called, not to innovation, but to renovation; to a bringing back of that which our fathers once had, which was unduly hidden from them, which is ours by inheritance, not by acquisition, which was not made by us, nor even by them, but first received by them, and then transmitted to us. To explore an old way, not to survey for a new one, is the work of him who would be a reformer in religion; for it is not here as in other sciences. Not only does there exist a collection of facts, natural and revealed, which form the proper basis of religious argumentation, and analogous to those upon which other systems of knowledge are founded, but there is also, superadded to this resemblance, a broad distinction: namely, that we have in religion the assurance that that scheme of doctrine which the universal Church has ever drawn from Scripture is, in all its fundamental characteristics, eternally and unchangeably true. To remove from the face of that truth whatever may have sullied or obscured it, to repel assaults upon its purity and integrity, to illustrate and make it known, and to adapt and prepare the minds of men, by the means which itself supplies, for its reception—these are the objects of religious reform; and when, instead of imaging to ourselves a modern revelation of which we are the favoured subjects, we desire simply a recurrence to the old truth of the Gospel in the old spirit of the Gospel, we check the exorbitance of selfish pride by placing between ourselves and the Divinity an instrumental agency inde-

pendent of ourselves; while it still remains true, that for the very perception of the existing defects, and of any means for their removal, we must refer entirely and alone to God.

26. Though with a trembling hand, it will now be attempted to specify particulars, in which may perhaps be perceived the peculiar and unfavourable characteristics of a period of revival. Are we not apt to undervalue ordinances and Church authority? To give to each man, not only the ultimate determination of his own belief and conduct, but an absolute licence of overlooking all but what comes to him direct from the fountain of self? or, at all events, what is transfused through self as the only medium? Does not the individual substitute in some measure religious evidences of which he himself is the only possible witness, for the recognised, ordained, and authoritative testimony afforded him by the palpable acts and fixed laws of the Church? Have we sufficiently endeavoured to realise those benefits which even the lower and instrumental parts of religion may afford, as, for example, even that bodily exercise which for this life is declared to be somewhat profitable?* Nay, have we not been neglectful of the duty of drawing out and striving to transcribe upon ourselves, the great features of Christian obedience in that degree of detail into which it ought to be developed? Have we not a tendency to substitute self-contrived bonds of association and of

* 1 Tim. iv. 8.

agency for the old and recognised relation which, as among ourselves, we should chiefly regard, of creatures ruined and redeemed together, and united in the one Catholic Church of Christ?

27. But let it not be supposed that it is hereby desired to imply that an amount of blame is due individually to those who have been mainly employed in promoting the advance of our religious movement, exactly commensurate with the amount of these detriments and disadvantages, partial as even these latter are, which may have attended it. The defects and even the positive mischiefs which may adhere to it are mainly imputable to the previous lethargy. As the cold theology of the last century may have partially arisen out of the practical and political excesses by which in the foregoing one religious profession was disgraced, so, in a connexion more evident and proximate, the faults in the religious temper of this period may have been connected, to a great extent, with the opposite errors of the age which it succeeds.

28. Lastly, let it not be thought that this is a speculative subject. We are too fond of laying the blame of existing evils on "the Church" as an imaginary person. But we have all a real, though divided, responsibility for the character, the actions, and the omissions of the Church, since they are made up of, and determined by, those of her members. Our individual amendment will brighten her glory, as it has been tarnished by our individual defects and delinquencies. The full development of religious belief,

and its free influence upon conduct, are matters finally placed in practice, under the principle of toleration, at our own disposal, and with the power thus admitted a corresponding obligation is entailed. From a due sense and conscientious discharge of that obligation in individual minds, will be found to proceed a leavening spirit which may, under the ordinary providence of God, be speedily and palpably felt to have affected the mass, and to have affected it for good.

29. It is now time briefly to indicate the course of observation which is to be followed in these pages. I shall attempt, in the first instance, to present a familiar, or at least a partial, representation of the moral characteristics and effects of those doctrines which are now perhaps more than ever felt in the English Church to be full of intrinsic value, and which likewise appear to have so much of special adaptation to the circumstances of the time. They are particularly (to omit the mention of points for the most part minor, on which a greater diversity of opinion may without disadvantage prevail) the doctrine of the visibility of the Church, of the apostolical succession in the ministry, of the authority of the Church in matters of faith, of the things signified in the sacraments. On these I shall endeavour to touch in succession, excepting only the one topic which bears upon the right of private judgment, and of which I have elsewhere had occasion to treat in a somewhat similar view.* And I prefix a discussion on

* See "The State in its Relations with the Church," chapters V. and VI. (third edition).

that which is termed Rationalism, by which I hope to supply assistance in determining what are the predispositions and anticipations with which we ought, upon truly rational grounds, to train our minds for the proposed inquiry. Lastly, after having thus far regarded the subject ethically, I strive to show the practical results of these principles upon our relations, as members of the Anglican Church, with one another, and with the members of other religious communions, under the peculiar circumstances of the present day.

30. I have been in some degree at a loss to choose an appellation which should be at once convenient for habitual use, intelligible to the generality of readers, comprehensive enough to include the several chief topics on which these chapters touch, and yet not so large as to include other tenets equally Catholic, equally primitive, equally taught by the universal and perpetual Church. In selecting, as upon the whole preferable to any other, the phrase "Church principles," I do not mean by it to imply that these are the only principles taught by the Church, or that they were the principles specifically urged by the early Church against the early heresies; for the early heretics were not bold enough, it seems, to deny them. But I mean merely, with whatever degree of precision, to imply by this appellation, that they are the principles relating to the constitution of the Church, that they are strictly its *principia* or elements, and that all of them are easily to be extracted by analysis from the idea of the Church, as one, holy, Catholic, and apos-

tolic, according to our constant and unanimous profession of faith.

31. The general subject thus described and thus ordinarily designated in this volume is capable of discussion in several distinct modes. The first, the most appropriate, and the highest of these, is the scientific process whereby these principles are deduced and proved from Holy Scripture. This is the proper office of the theologian: and it has been my desire to occupy no more of this ground than has seemed necessary for the purpose of intelligible statement of my subject. At a time when there is so much defect of information, and so much consequent misapprehension abroad, it is necessary to be more specific in this matter than might otherwise have been desirable: and indeed the sense of the exclusive rights of Scripture as the tribunal of ultimate appeal is so strong among Englishmen, that they would hardly listen to other considerations which they rightly deem secondary, at least they would receive them under hostile prepossessions, from any author who should allow it to be so much as suspected, that he had a concealed desire to emancipate himself from such restraints as the sense of the sacred writings may impose. But let no one suppose in opening this volume that it pretends to repeat the process of demonstration upon these topics; for it the reader must refer to other and easily accessible sources.

32. The next method in which these important questions may be discussed is that which, abandoning

the examination of their proofs from Revelation, regards them in their ethical tendencies, in their bearings, that is to say, upon the formation of human character, and in that sense upon the accomplishment of the work of the Gospel. Such a mode of inquiry may establish presumptions in their favour even with those who have not yet been directly instructed in, nor have for themselves ascertained, their truth; but its more legitimate and specific office is, to corroborate the faith of those who have already received the doctrines, by evincing their beautiful and perfect harmony with the purposes, so far as they are legible to us, of the Christian scheme; their correspondence with the necessities and the capabilities of human nature. Or it may be usefully and seasonably employed in the removal of adverse prepossessions which may already have more or less occupied the minds of men, and which may operate as serious impediments to the consideration of the more direct argument upon the merits, that is to say, upon the theological proofs of the principles themselves. In this labour there is less that bears a strictly professional character: it is conversant with theology indeed, but in the philosophical aspect of the science, upon the side and at the points where it comes into contact with man: and any results of the investigation may possibly be liable to less suspicion, when they have been wrought out by persons who came to their task under no official obligations or prepossessions, and who viewed their subject from a position occupied by them in common

with every member of the Church who has in any degree given his mind to moral speculations.

33. Besides, however, this inquiry into characteristic tendencies, or what may be called general consequences, there is also a more limited yet not immaterial function which remains: it is the examination of the specific and particular bearings which these principles are likely to have upon the religious interests and feelings of the day in our own country: a sphere comparatively narrow, but affording room, as it appears to me, for useful explanations. And this is a part of the subject which has received very little attention from those who have written in defence of the Catholic principles of our ecclesiastical institutions, and who, in accordance with the bent of their own minds as well as with their primary obligations, have usually bestowed more labour on the proof of the principles than on attempting to show that they involve no painful consequences, introduce no real causes of division, deny to no man his spiritual privileges; but, on the contrary, that while they are the divinely appointed bulwarks of the faith as long as the world shall last, they offer to us also the best promise of peace and practicable union. I wish to show, or at least to incite the minds of men to that kind and those trains of thought which will lead them to perceive, that neither as it respects our own communion, nor as it respects the Romanists, nor as it respects the Dissenters, ought we to find in these principles, anything but the means of consolidated

strength, of quickened responsibility, and of extended charity.

34. And this work of disarming prejudice, although it be altogether secondary to that of producing actual and direct conviction, is one at no time to be lightly thought of, but, in particular, not to be neglected at a period when almost the whole of the opposition to these principles has proceeded, not so much upon the question of their theological truth or falsehood, as upon that of the inconveniences, with respect to the members of the Church and of other bodies, supposed to follow logically from their recognition; that is, it has tended not so much to attack conviction directly, as to sap or to impede it by accumulating hostile prejudice. The inverse process is that which I propose; and it is one which a man living in the world of politics as opposed to one living in studious retirement, a layman as contradistinguished from a minister of the Church, may perhaps, whatever be his countervailing defects, undertake thus far not without some comparative advantage. For in situations where the religion we profess is undisturbed and alone, where it seems to enjoy the most venerable and undisputed prescriptions, it might be scarcely possible for us adequately to appreciate the difficulties arising from the hostile contact of other forms of faith, or to consider in detail, with the requisite nearness of view, its power of self-adaptation to the task of overcoming those difficulties. But those who live where their religion must be constantly subject to assault or im-

putation, where a thousand shafts are openly or obliquely aimed at it, where at the least it is subject to the competition and the collision of all the bodies, Romanist and Protestant, which have separated from the Church—these are inclined by their daily life to a strictly practical manner of considering the question: it is not easy for them to avoid perceiving its difficulties, and they will be less suspected of a disposition to extenuate or hide them.

35. It would, however, be most arrogant in itself, and most remote from my intention, to pretend in any the slightest degree, even within the limited province I have thus marked out, to the functions of a teacher. On this account I have refrained from arguments properly theological respecting the Church, beyond what seemed necessary to supply a counter-statement at least to those trivial, feeble, and depreciated notions which are still more or less current among us, though verging towards extinction. On this account also I have refrained from proceeding to inquire what more strictly practical results, what measures and modes of conduct, ought to arise out of the clear and full apprehension of our religious position. It is not, however, only the matter, but the manner of what is said, on which we must rely for the preservation of the demarcating lines between the character of the commissioned instructor who delivers with authority the message of revelation, and the private person who contributes his mite of thought and of inquiry to the common stock, always reserving his final allegiance

for that which is catholic and approved. Experience makes him in some degree a witness to results, and study may throw before him some light upon tendencies: and it is his duty to exercise his faculties upon that precious inheritance of truth into which he has been adopted, provided in doing it he remember his relation to the Church as a parent, and to her members, as his fellow learners under her teaching; and show that he strictly applies to himself that rule which Saint Augustine, in his great humility, adopted before his hearers: *Magistrum unum omnes habemus, et in unâ scholâ condiscipuli sumus.*

CHAPTER II.

RATIONALISM.

1—4. The anti-rationalistic and rationalistic principles: the latter in two forms. 5—9. Province of the understanding. 10—18. It cannot cure a fault which lies in the affections. 19. True statement of the question. 20, 21. Homogeneity required in the affections. 22—37. Objection from the discrepancy between belief and practice. 38—42. The need of some access to man besides that through the understanding. 43—48. The existence of such other access illustrated from Scripture. 49—51. Without it doctrinal orthodoxy cannot be maintained. 52. Illustration in the Sacraments. 53, 54. Harmony and co-operation of the affections and the understanding. 55, 56. Summary.

1. In conformity with the introductory sketch just given, it will be my endeavour in subsequent chapters to discuss the principle of the Sacraments, and to show the vital union and harmony of that principle with the doctrines of the visible Church, and of the Apostolical succession; and how all the three conduce to sustain, embody, exhibit, and impress the great truth that Christianity is, in its first, highest, and most essential character, *a religion of influences which transcend, though they do not oppose, the understanding.* But, to remove prejudices flowing naturally out of the spirit of the age as well as of human nature in general, I would first endeavour to show how perfectly reasonable and how thoroughly Scriptural is this line of argument: and that they, in fact, are the true advocates of the legitimate use of the understanding, who

seek to ascribe to it the honour which is its own and not another's, by defining its appointed province: how essentially and necessarily the reception of Christianity implies an action over and above that of the understanding: and consequently how that reception is rendered difficult, and finally impossible, if we transmute our system into one which claims and appeals to that faculty alone.

2. First, let us consider what are the objections taken to rationalism in the popular sense; let us inquire whether they are sufficient to show that it is an improper, and therefore an irrational, method of religious inquiry: and further, whether over and above the common forms in which it appears, still there be not an inner and more subtle form of the evil, liable to affect the mental habits in religion even of those who have offered to it, in its primary and popular aspect, a determined resistance. Now rationalism is commonly, at least in this country, taken to be the reduction of Christian *doctrine* to the standard and measure of the human understanding. The uniform consequence of the theory of rationalism thus understood is, as might be expected, a general depreciation of all other than preceptive teaching, as dealing chiefly with mere abstractions, as belonging to a region remote and impalpable: and accordingly there ensues an unnatural disruption of the strictly perceptive parts of the Gospel from those which can alone make them available for the restoration of human nature. Because Christianity in its results comes so imme-

diately home to every want and capability of our constitution, therefore forsooth, with aggravated ingratitude and presumption, we own and appropriate those portions of it which tell directly on our mutual intercourse and our personal advantage; rejecting alike the wonderful machinery by which alone they can be brought into activity, and the ulterior purposes which they themselves subserve in regulating the relations between our Creator and ourselves.

3. Now if the objectors to rationalism in the sense above stated would act upon the whole of their own argument, it would be found quite sufficient, as I believe, for every theological purpose. They object to the human understanding in its natural state, as the criterion of what purports to be revealed truth. In so doing, they stand upon the broadest ground of Scriptural authority. "The natural man," says St. Paul, in a very well-known text,* "receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." The rationalistic theory maintains the very reverse of the inspired declaration, and teaches that the natural man can know and does receive Divine truth; and so much so, that his reception or rejection of it is to be to the conscience the legitimate criterion of its reality. But among us who are agreed in the repudiation of this theory, is there no more hidden yet very influential division or distinction of sentiment?

* 1 Cor. ii. 14.

4. It is a common opinion, and one respectable on account of the respectability of those persons by whom it is entertained, that where orthodox doctrines are held and in proportion as they are inculcated, the form of religion is to be considered spiritual. Such persons commonly argue that it is not enough to have the precepts of the Gospel taught without its doctrines. True indeed; but neither is it enough to have what are termed the doctrines along with the precepts, unless we also have the vital influence and powers of Christianity brought into action. If the term orthodox doctrine included fully the doctrine of Sacraments and positive institutions in Christianity, this might be sufficient; but I speak of orthodox doctrine in the common sense, which does not comprise any strong affirmative idea, or any prominent exhibition of the Sacraments and the Church; which scarcely recognises the Church as being an essential part of the Divine revelation, although it for the most part freely allows it to be fitly and rightly joined with it as a subaltern instrument for the accomplishment of its purposes. But orthodox doctrine, we must not overlook the fact, is, even in its less usual but more legitimate sense, wholly distinct from spiritual religion, although it be a preparation for it and an appointed instrument of its production; and although, further, spiritual religion can have no permanent hold where orthodox doctrine is denied, we have a partial recognition, even in popular phraseology, of the inefficiency of doctrine when standing singly for the purposes of religion, in the phrase "head-

knowledge," popularly used to describe one defective form of spiritual condition. But the use of this phrase merely throws incidental light upon a truth of which we are too little conscious, and of which I am about to attempt the exhibition. There is, it may be feared, an imperfectly developed form of rationalism, subtler than that heretofore indicated, in which it taints the reasonings and the views of many who are conscious only of honest aversion to that noxious principle. The grosser form is that according to which the natural understanding is the adequate and final judge of all matter purporting to be revealed. The finer form is betrayed in the opinion, which teaches that although the understanding requires correction, yet its concurrence is a necessary and uniform condition of the entrance of any vital influence of religion into the human being. This religious, and therefore also metaphysical, error it will now be endeavoured on metaphysical grounds to confute.

5. It is a great principle in all psychology, and therefore highly necessary to be remembered in theological investigations, that we must regard the nature of a man as a complex whole, whose parts have important and fixed relations and reciprocal influences. Ancient and modern schemes of philosophy have almost always been partial and faulty in this particular, looking at some single faculty, or some one tendency, of human nature, adjusting moral and metaphysical systems with an exclusive reference to it, and leaving the residue of the composition of the man without its proper

nutriment. Thus, in the works of Cicero, it is made matter of reproach by the Academics against the Stoic school, with whom they in great measure concurred, that in excluding from the term and title of good what related to the lower functions of man, they overlooked some of the parts of his nature, whereas they were bound to satisfy all of them. I notice this not as pronouncing an opinion on the validity of the objection, since there is an inquiry first to be made whether spiritual good ought to be distinguished by a name peculiar to itself, by reason of its essential distinctions, but because it shows that there was a sense in those who represented the Platonic and Aristotelian schools of the necessity of a complex regard to man as a complex being, in his various functions of sense, understanding, affections, reason, and in their mutual relations.

6. Now, however orthodox doctrine be, in capable subjects, the proper method of first moving the affections of the man, we cannot fail to perceive that the impression upon those affections is a thing distinct from the doctrine itself, even when produced by it. That this impression is not necessarily attendant on an intellectual appreciation of it is manifest, or the devils would not believe and tremble. With equal plainness we see that the immediate purpose of religion must be the sanctification of the man, through the instrumentality of any and of all his faculties. It follows that each of those faculties ought to be employed in the work, in proportion to its capability of

serving the purpose. Now it will be acknowledged to be known from experience, that the affections precede the understanding in the earlier stage of their respective developments, although the processes be in great part contemporaneous. The human being is, therefore, capable of right or wrong affections at an earlier period of his existence than that at which he becomes capable of having such right or wrong affections engendered through the medium of an intellectual, or a consciously reflective, process. And as the need of the human being is thus larger than the measure of his intellect, he requires some other feeders. And by this reasoning, independently of any other, we arrive at the conclusion that the inculcation of orthodox doctrine, while it is in its own nature a thing distinct from sanctification, is also not sufficient to meet the necessities of our nature, or to apply the antidote immediately after the poison has begun to work. We are led therefore to look for some other provision.

7. And further, even when the understanding has been developed, it is insufficient for the full accomplishment of the work committed to it. It was appointed by God to conduct a sound machine, but not to reconstitute a deranged one. It is the very substance and brunt of the charge against the actual human nature, that truth has lost its power over the understanding in a practical and moral sense; that is, its absolute and plenary, above all its *impelling* power. This seems a paradox to those who are only aware that the understanding is appointed for the consideration and cognizance of

truth. But the paradox is explained, when it is remembered that this faculty is now subject to a distracting bias, which counteracts by an opposite force the force of truth, and blindfolds the understanding by the fumes which passion can, and habitually does, emit. True, the understanding cannot be forced, except by truth real or apparent, but its vision may be intercepted by a thickened atmosphere; a false colouring may be diffused over objects, of which it cannot divest them; because our primary ideas of objects are not formed by the understanding, although they cannot be connected and compared except through its agency. But the very terms connexion and comparison imply separate parts, the atoms or units of the moral world. The primary notions of those objects are formed according to the affections and not by the intellect, which works with such materials as are furnished to its hand from that more inward storehouse. Thus the understanding, though not subject to be coerced by the will, is subject to illusion, more perilous than force, because it gives to a false and illegitimate process the aspect of a correct one; and is liable from following apparent to reject substantial truth.

8. The link therefore is broken in man which should have connected his convictions and his actions. Given right affections, and therefore right primary notions, the understanding will do the rest and conduct faithfully to a conclusion what it has received; but given (and such is our case) wrong affections, wrong tendencies and leanings, as regards the law of duty and

of life, and then the very fidelity of the understanding perpetuates the error which has vitiated the first propositions that it formed, and reproducing it at each successive step establishes it in the conclusion. So that to rely upon those ideas of religion which our nature prompts because they are sanctioned by our natural understanding, would be as absurd as if Euclid should argue a proposition upon a wrong axiom, observing at the same time in every step an accurate adherence to that axiom, and a man should allege that accuracy in the subsequent proceeding as a ground for trusting the conclusion, whereas it forms the very demonstration of its falseness. It *cannot* be true.

9. And further: we constantly recognise the method of orthodox teaching as a principal means of the sanctification of man, and as the proper and specific means for initiating his spiritual instruction wherever, and in proportion as, the development of the understanding in the man opens this channel to his affections; but this not by a natural and inherent efficacy, not, as St. Paul says, by the "words of man's wisdom;" it is by "demonstration of the spirit and of power."* Why? Because the spiritual and the carnal principle have not common grounds in religion from which to reason, sufficient to move the man. True, there is in both a sense of pleasure and of pain; but of the objects within the range of our experience those which to the apprehension of the one are plea-

* 1 Cor. ii. 4.

surable, are painful in the view of the other, and *vice versâ*. Here, therefore, their range of contact determines. Both again have a conception of duty; but these conceptions are essentially distinct in respect of the supreme law to which duty is referred, and also of the rules and measures by which it is ascertained in human practice. Reasoning therefore may proceed to a certain point, situated somewhere between religion and irreligion; and we may undoubtedly derive aid from those relics and fragments of better views which are yet to be found amidst the ruins of the spiritual nature of man. But the analysis of moral action must have its limits: we may resolve questions into their elements, and these again we may divide into their constituent parts; but when we have fallen back on the simple ideas themselves, which are the original grounds of the argument, we shall find that the law of our actual nature and the law of Divine Revelation are fatally at variance upon those simple ideas, whose grounds (by the hypothesis) argument cannot explain; and here accordingly we see, that there must be a spiritual process rectifying these simple ideas and their root within us, in order that reasoning may take its due effect by setting out from right premises. Until we have the same primary conceptions of good and evil, of the sources of pleasure and pain, which the Gospel embodies, it is of no avail that we consent to employ in argument the phraseology which Scripture supplies, or that the steps of our reasonings are logically accurate.

10. Let us, however, proceed to consider the subject in more immediate connexion with its illustrations and under a stricter analysis. The assertion which I would use as the groundwork of all resistance to rationalism is, in its full breadth, this—that there must in every case be an action upon the man independent of the understanding, or the word preached will not profit, not being "mixed with faith in them that hear it." Not because their intellects are weak or obtuse, but because they have not the principle of faith. So it stands in the Scripture; and so it also stands in the nature of things and in logic, the science of the understanding itself, as I shall endeavour forthwith to show.

All our reasonings may be resolved into syllogisms, all our syllogisms into propositions, all our propositions into terms, with their connecting verb which affirms or denies; our terms may again be complex, and involve the use of propositions in order to their being duly explained; but these, in turn, may again be resolved into their constituent parts. Thus at length we arrive at terms which refuse all further analysis, and with respect to which therefore the understanding can afford us no effectual aid; but yet these terms are the indices of real ideas; these ideas have a true and not an imaginary being in the mind; their place is generally near its roots and foundations, and the faculty by which they are grasped has been termed that of simple apprehension.

11. Now it would be quite absurd to say that the faculty of simple apprehension is a part of the under-

standing, in the sense with which we have now to do. For example, we have a conception of a stone; it is made up of our perceptions of the different qualities of matter which the object offers, in a particular combination. I do not here enter into the metaphysical question of substance, which would be irrelevant. Suffice it to say, that our conception of a stone is made up of certain modes of the ideas of solidity, extension, figure, colour. Let us resolve the complex conception into these its elements: and now who will venture to say that we arrive at these elementary ideas by virtue of the understanding alone? Undoubtedly they do not become, in strictness of language, ideas, objects distinctly and consciously contemplated, until they have attained to their seat in the understanding. But it is not the understanding which acquires at first hand from the corresponding objects in extrinsic nature those particular complex impressions by the analysis of which it reaches finally to the simple ideas; they are communicated first in the shape of impressions to the sense; from the sense they have their form, and by the sense they are given over to the understanding in a state of truth or falsehood, that is of correspondence with or of difference from the extrinsic reality, according to the state of the sense itself. Upon the veracity of the senses therefore, and not upon the right action of the understanding, it depends whether these notions are accurate or otherwise.

12. Thus the understanding is governed by the sense in the conceptions which it forms of sensible

objects, whether those conceptions be faulty or correct, until it may have been enabled to institute some collateral and circuitous process by which, like a formula of verification in mathematics, it may try and rectify its results. But in the direct process, it has not the merit if our ear, eye, or touch be correct, nor the blame if they be erroneous. Thus the blind boy restored to sight attempted to grasp the moon over the top of a house, thinking it was close at hand. This was from no defect of his understanding. And thus a blind man compared his idea of the colour red to the sound of a trumpet, drawing, with great propriety, his analogy from sense.

13. Now as God has given us the senses to be a medium of conveying to us the properties of material objects, so he has enabled each of the other faculties of our nature to fix upon their appropriate objects in the immaterial world and bring them home to the laboratory of the mind, where they enter into their various forms and combinations. Thus the general idea of truth is formed by the pure reason; the idea of memory and of the simply intellectual faculties themselves in the same way; the mathematical axioms and the relations, for the most part, of number, quality, and (metaphysical) quantity in the same way. Thus much for example.

14. And lastly, the affections also have their appropriate objects, like the senses, and like the reason. We conceive of objects as suitable for our love or hatred in their various forms and degrees, according to the

representations made of those objects by the affections to the understanding, just as we conceive of size, colour, figure, sound, in quantity and quality, according to the representations carried by the sense to the understanding. Now the senses convey faithfully or unfaithfully according to their own conformation, their own internal aptitude or inaptitude to appreciate and embrace their objects, and to receive, as it were, the type or copy of them. And so likewise the affections transmit faithfully or unfaithfully, according to their own texture and composition. If the ear be vitiated it faultily misrepresents the note in music, and the understanding innocently misapprehends, and the tongue innocently miscalls it. If that faculty whereby we love be vitiated, then, according to the degree of vitiation, it distorts and spoils those impressions of objects which it is appointed to receive; an object in itself worthy of love is transmitted through a false impression to the understanding as worthy of aversion, and the understanding, by no fault of its own, receives the error and perpetuates it in its own reasonings, refusing to it, or ratifying the refusal to it, of love, and attaching to it the name and notion opposite to love.

15. If then the Christian religion consisted in a perception of sensible objects, and in being duly affected by their qualities, we might imbibe it without Divine influence, because our senses, however limited or weak, are not generally corrupt; but, upon the whole, discharge with fidelity the offices to which God appointed them. If the religion of Christ depended upon the

acknowledgment of mathematical truths, the same remark and reason would apply. But because it consists in a perception of objects that lie within the province of the affections, and in the being duly influenced by them; in the receiving as worthy of love that which is worthy of love, and as worthy of hatred that which is worthy of hatred; because true perception of whatever kind can only be had through affinity and internal aptitude in the percipient function of the mind or body: and because the divine word declares that there is no such affinity and internal aptitude in the present state of our affections, and teaches that they are diseased, and at variance with the truth of objects, and that they misrepresent them, attaching to those worthy of love the attributes that merit hatred, and *vice versâ;* from these premises, it strictly follows, that we, who fully admit the divine word, must both admit the corruption of the affections, and must also, in conformity with the foregoing argument, hold, upon grounds of bare and strict reason, the incompetency of the unassisted understanding, not for its own work, but for a work not its own, namely, the correction of primary and fundamental errors in the impressions transmitted to it, and by it represented and handled in the distinct shape of ideas.

16. Let us endeavour to illustrate what has been said. Allow that every man follows in the main that which the mass of his nature, or its predominant influences, may desire. Now the Scripture sets forth to us the fulfilment of the will of God as the best and

paramount object of desire. But that will of God refuses to the natural man the very things that he chiefly loves. What natural instinct prompts as desirable, the will of God says is the reverse. Here, therefore, our affection is at variance with the divine command, which command undoubtedly is in its terms perceivable by the understanding. They are opposed to one another as affirmative and negative. Nor is the difficulty removed by the promise of heaven or the threat of hell. For the natural man does not find in his view of the heavenly life that character of desirableness which the word of God asserts to belong to it: again, they are at issue upon the very rudiments which constitute the essence of happiness, and contradict one another. Or if he be tempted by the promise of happiness in the gross, and terrified by the prospect of pains, which are undoubtedly described in terms that he can appreciate, still the energy of our affections is much more powerfully incited by proximate objects, as a general rule, than by distant ones, especially when they are also more thoroughly in affinity with our disposition; and will therefore, unless they be touched from within by a divine influence, incline much more to present enjoyments than to the negative idea of the avoidance of future pains, and the remote and feeble idea of the acquisition of joy in heaven.

17. In fine, to perceive in the will of God those qualities of goodness and desirableness without which we cannot love it, our affections must have been first detached from their present objects, which are such as

they themselves have grasped by their natural impulses, arising out of their actual and depraved composition. No reasoning can effect this change more than it can prove an object to be white which the eye testifies to be black. For as the eye conveys the impression of blackness, so the affection conveys the impression of desirableness. It attaches that quality to the dictates of our own will; that is to say, in effect, of itself. It does not see it belonging to the objects dictated by the will of God. Surely then it is indisputable, that as the sense if depraved requires a physical operation (whether of nature or art) to rectify it: so the affection being depraved requires a spiritual impression, and that since the subject matter of the Christian religion has for its office to present food to the affections, that food can only be available as such by an aptitude in these to receive it, instead of the existing contrariety; in other words, belief depends upon assimilation: *quod sumus, scimus:* and the understanding alone cannot cure the affections, more than it can heal a wound or set a limb.

18. Yet let it not be supposed that, if this reasoning be admitted, it will have the effect of implying the impotence of the understanding. In truth this is not really a question between the understanding and some other faculty, but between the rebellious nature of man and Him who created and who is now reclaiming it. The man who denies the necessity of spiritual influence in order to the right appreciation of the Christian religion, is not asserting the prerogative of the under-

standing against the affections. With his views, his understanding will be as much influenced by his affections, as the understanding of those who hold an opposite belief would be influenced by their affections. Under cover of asserting the rights and dignity of the understanding, he who thus rationalises, is in truth asserting his intention to be governed by his own notions and desires; to make his actual nature the measure and the law of that scheme of religion, which avowedly aims at operating a fundamental change in it. And the understanding is not deprived, in the Christian theory, of the office which belongs to it: but fulfils the same office for the rectified and divinely renewed affections, as it would have performed for the rebellious and carnal affections.

19. Besides which it is right to observe, that the understanding has in fact the power, by a circuitous process, partially at least, to correct the errors of sense, by its faculty of dealing with a number of subject matters, and applying to one the light of another. Had the boy restored to sight known astronomy before he was shown the moon, he might have reasoned with himself that her appearance corresponded with that of a planet which he had learnt to be very distant from the earth, and might have suspended obedience to the impulse derived from sense, in deference to a doubt thus suggested from another quarter. So also the understanding, presenting to us, for example, the pains of hell, which *are* appreciable by our natural affections, may exercise a certain influence in controlling our

pursuit of our own pleasures, and thus produce a certain degree of modification in the texture of the affections themselves. But I deny the sufficiency of this influence to cure radical error and vice, such error and vice as the Scripture asserts to be in our affections. It is obviously an influence drawn from the affections themselves; drawn from one part of them, and applied remedially to another. But although partial good may thus be done, there is no power in any part of the natural affections sufficient to effect such change in their fundamental tendencies as Christianity, according to all those who admit the plenary authority of Scripture, (to whom alone this reasoning is addressed,) confessedly requires. Let us then recognise the understanding as a helper in the great work to which God makes available each and all of our faculties; but we must see, that to assign it an exclusive or original jurisdiction, is at variance with psychological truth, inasmuch as it has no influence strictly its own, and as its indirect means are wholly inadequate: it remains therefore to show the reasonableness of believing in a distinct and transcendant influence.

20. No doubt it was an error of ancient philosophy to affirm the abstract existence of general ideas, and their perception by the mind or their necessary indwelling there, as a previous condition to our perception of all particular objects. But Aristotle* exploded

* Eth. ii. c. 1.

that error, and established in its stead what appears to be the truth, namely, that although we do not perceive by virtue of antecedent possession of the formal idea of the thing perceived, yet we do perceive by virtue of something intrinsic to the percipient faculty, namely, its adaptation and conformity to the thing perceived.

21. In the case, however, of the affections, we may go further than in the case of the sense. It may be said, for example, that the visual organ need not have in its composition anything akin to light, in order to discharge its function of receiving and transmitting it, more than a conductor of heat has anything of heat belonging to its essence; or than wax partakes inherently of the nature of the impressions it receives. With the senses, then, it is adaptation and conformity alone which we can show to exist between the faculty and the object, and not actual homogeneity and resemblance: but in the affections the adaptation is actual, inherent, essential resemblance. That which we love we are, and it enters into our essence upon the whole in the same degree in which, upon the whole, it engrosses our love. At least, no man surely can love anything except by virtue of elements in his composition, however latent or subdued, yet in their nature homogeneous with that object; nor hate, except by virtue of elements repugnant to the nature of that object. That is (in each case), the real, or the apparent and presumed, nature; for that it may be misapprehended is immaterial to the present purpose; the

argument is, that a man loves or hates by virtue of homogeneity, and having this homogeneity as the basis of the sentiment, though the proportions of love and hatred may be modified by other considerations. Nor can any one, I believe, either deny that the affections are, like the senses, faculties either actually percipient, or at least governing the perception, of subject matter in their own province; or refuse to allow that in all cases we perceive by virtue of an adaptation in the percipient faculty; or give any definition of that adaptation in the case of the affections, which shall not involve the homogeneity that I have formally asserted.

22. It is perhaps here that it may be most appropriate to consider the objection to the foregoing argument, which readily suggests itself, and which may be clothed in the following language. It will readily be allowed that our conduct depends mainly on the state of the affections: if, then, our moral and religious perceptions are, as well as our conduct, dependent on elements cognisable only by the affections, and conveyed by them to the understanding, a man's belief must be the necessary measure of his practice, inasmuch as both will depend upon the same causal influences: whereas, it is obvious that, in the generality of cases, if not in all, his belief is greatly above his practice; this fact consequently destroys, as it may be urged, the rule which it has here been attempted to establish.

23. The reply however is, that the elements of our

religious and moral perceptions are not cognisable exclusively by the affections; and that, even where they are, yet there are some common points upon which our affections, as they are by birth, enable us, though dimly or circuitously, to apprehend what is revealed to us by God, yet with an influence too feeble to reach into our practice. For example, our natural affections prompt us to desire enjoyment as such. The Gospel promises enjoyment in heaven. Thus, because we do not uniformly nor wholly analyse, but dwell in part upon the term enjoyment in the gross, the promise of it is not wholly incomprehensible and unavailable to us; and thus has an influence in raising the standard of our belief respecting the duty of seeking heaven, independently of anything like a really virtuous state of the affections, in which they would be attracted not to the enjoyment simply, but to the excellence of the particular acts and habits wherein the enjoyments of heaven reside.

24. I now proceed to assign a second cause of discrepancy between the belief and practice of a man, between his religious convictions and his affections. Our inward state undergoes very great fluctuations: emotions of different orders are aroused at different times; and that which at one moment subsists, and acts in such force as to determine both belief and practice, at another becomes perfectly powerless, and a rival influence takes its place Now our belief is more conscious and deliberate than our practice. Many things evil we do upon the impulse of the mo-

ment, the rightfulness of which, as a general rule, we should hesitate or refuse to affirm. Again, our affections have by nature a certain affinity to right, and repugnance from wrong; to right imperfectly, I admit, but yet not altogether untruly apprehended: they supply corresponding impressions to the understanding where the mind is undisturbed, and the understanding forms corresponding conclusions: strong passions, on the other hand, are plainly unnatural, as well as unchristian, and their agency is usually short, and overpowers but does not persuade the understanding. While, therefore, such passion has a great effect on practice in the tempestuous moment of excitement, by reason of the deliberative character of the understanding it has, as it were, scarcely time enough to force a way into our belief, which remains to be governed by such of the affections as have a more steady and permanent action. The second cause of discrepancy, then, is that action is more liable than belief to the sudden assaults of the passions. It is not necessary that we should draw any broad generic distinction between the passions and the affections; but we may define the former to be affections raised to such a height and violence as to baffle the understanding, and preclude for the moment its full action.

25. Next let us take an example to show that the jurisdiction of the affections is not exclusive. When we have begun to analyse that notion of enjoyment in Heaven which the Gospel presents, we find a want of

congeniality between its particulars, the life of thanksgiving and praise, and the like, on the one hand, and the tendencies of our own affections on the other. But the understanding has derived from independent sources a strong conviction of the *power* of God: further, it knows that our affections are not immutable; and that that power may hereafter render agreeable what is not so now: these convictions have an evident tendency to raise our belief towards Heaven as an object of desire, antecedently to the assimilation of our affections themselves to the food which will there be afforded them; and thus also to elevate both our belief and practice, but the first *more* than the last, because the last is more liable to be determined on the moment, in its particular acts, by the quick instinctive solicitation of the affections, before reasoning or reflection can take place.

26. I go on to state a fourth mode, in which it may happen that our practice should fall short of our belief, consistently with the theory according to which it has been attempted to show that the main subject matter of ethics is not in the understanding, but in the affections and desires, inasmuch as it is their office to form the models of those terms, which, when allotted in the mind to their respective ideas, become materials for the understanding wherewith to work. Now this mode is one corresponding in great measure to that in which the πίστις ἠθικὴ, or the principle of confidence, operates according to the science of rhetoric. Under a stricter analysis than that science re-

quires, we shall venture to term it the mode of substitution. Now let us inquire what this mode of substitution is, and how it may operate, not in absolutely lowering the standard of practice, but in raising that of belief.

27. Let it be granted that practice is governed in the main, or upon the average, by the state of a man's affections and desires, varying as they do, in their comparative weight, at different points of time. Now a depraved theory does not bring with it the same degree of pleasure as a depraved practice: consequently the temptation to a depraved theory is less powerful than the inducement to a depraved act, upon the same subject matter. In the case of the act, the pleasure is immediate, and helps to blink or hide the sin. In the case when the evil is to be conceived and to be entertained in the distinct form of a principle before it issues into practice, the pleasure is contingent and remote, and less able to raise a tempest of passion in its behalf; so that frequently the same degree of strength will enable us to repudiate a mischievous principle, which will not enable us, when the occasion is immediate, to refuse an action such as can only be justified, and therefore such as can only with consistency be performed, upon that principle. The facts here assumed are, I think, as undeniable, as the inferences are direct and logical. And hence St. Paul* describes as an aggravated guilt that of those, who

* Rom. i. 32.

not only do evil, but have pleasure in those that do it: *i. e.*, who begin to regard evil as a kind of law to their nature, as a principle authoritative in itself, and a bond, consequently, of union and sympathy: they are supposed to have reached such hardness as that they deliberately contemplate it in their belief, and are not merely surprised into it by negligence or passion, or want of self-government. With this idea it is that Milton, in describing Belial as the extreme of base wickedness, has placed him at the close of the infernal procession, and writes—

> "Belial came last: than whom a spirit more lewd
> Fell not from heaven, or more gross to love
> Vice for itself." *

28. From what has been said, it follows that the influence of example will be much greater in discountenancing immoral theories—*e. g.*, that which declares marriage a needless institution—than in restraining immoral practice. To test this proposition, let us for a moment imagine, on the one hand, an immoral theory, with results supposed to be convenient or agreeable; and, on the other, an example of one whom we revere, sustaining an adverse (that is, a moral and true) theory: thus much at least is immediately manifest, that our affection to a particular person, on the one hand, draws us towards a good belief; our affection to pleasure, on the other, towards a belief which is false and evil.

* Par. Lost, b. i.

29. We are next to observe, that of these two influences the first is one which belongs to the class of substitutions. It is an influence attractive towards good, yet not towards good for its own sake, but for that of an intermediate living object, whom we love in the complex regard under which we behold him as a being made up of many faculties, and holding perhaps many opinions, some of them more acceptable to us, and others less so, but whereof all, being as it were parts of himself, do in effect, by association, derive an authority in our eyes from the fact of their being his, over and above what they would be able to exercise from their own intrinsic force. The influence leads us to follow good for the sake of a particular man who is good; and whom we love not perhaps at all for his goodness, or less for his goodness than his power or talent: we therefore substitute, for the proper object of our love, another, and follow the proper object because it thus becomes appended and tied to that other. And here it is clear that the affections are still, in many cases (*e. g.*, where a beautiful assemblage of human virtues forms the attracting charm of the person supposed) the principal source from whence, though indirectly, are derived the materials for such an operation in the mind.

30. Here then the principle of confidence, properly so called, induces us to place the judgment of another, as expressed by his actions and character, in that position which is higher than we think our own entitled to occupy, on account of our love or other attrac-

tive regard to that other person: and, in the case we have assumed, this influence stands in the place of a certain quantity of intrinsic and direct affection towards what is good; and, so standing, becomes liable to all the rules under which we show that while both belief and practice are essentially founded upon the affections, yet the latter is, under that very theory, likely to rest below the former. It is unnecessary to consider in detail the other cases in which the same principle of confidence or substitution may appear under different forms. We have taken that where the attraction to good is in the form of example. If it be in the shape of direct precept from those who have influence over us, this makes no change in the conditions. It still remains more apt and able to modify our belief than our conduct.

31. Nor does it matter whether the attractive regard or influence be based upon the strength, or talent, or human virtue of the regarded party; except as these are in a progressive scale of dignity and worth. But in none of them do we love the man for his goodness; and yet in all of them, he being by supposition both good and also loved, we are attracted towards his goodness by being attracted towards him; and towards goodness in general, by being attracted towards his goodness. And it should also be remarked, that all these extrinsic elements of inducement or suasion, which take the forms of precept or example, and which take effect through our love, or admiration, or trust, or respect, or fear of persons, operate much

more effectively upon our theories than upon our practice: they are usually first entertained in the region of the understanding, and they are apt to remain in the form of mere speculation.

32. Now in the recognition of these intermediate attractive powers, it is quite clear that the understanding may have a share. For instance, it is by an intellectual faculty, at all events, that we form the conception of power, or that of talent; and either of these may be the particular feature, or the joint features, which are the groundwork of the influence exercised over us by the man possessing them. And thus the understanding, by leading us to follow and copy the good man for the sake of these secondary considerations, collaterally brings our affections into contact with his goodness, and gives to it, as it were, the opportunity of acting upon their susceptibilities. Upon the other hand, if the visible human affections of a man who teaches us to cultivate the divine and spiritual affection be the basis of the charm, then it is obviously through our affections that we appreciate him.

33. This power of confidence, then, has a ground in the several departments of the mind; and the question, in which of the two it operates with the greater force, depends upon a larger one—that, namely, whether in general, or in the given case, or in both, the affections supply the subject matter and the movements of the individual character in a greater or less degree than the other faculties of his nature, his passions, his particular propensions, his lower desires. It is enough

here to have shown that the work is a joint one; that confidence is operative on practice by substitution; and operative alike through the single action of mind, and through the double action of mind and heart: we might perhaps add, that third case, in which the heart prompts instinctive action without the perceptible intervention of the understanding in its instrumental capacity. Consequently other influences, besides those that are derivable from the direct and proper action of the affections, may, by association or substitution, come to have a part in the formation of our own dispositions respecting good and evil, and as these elements may act with different degrees of force on our belief and our practice respectively, we are therefore to expect on this ground that the state of the affections considered singly may not be an accurate and invariable index either of our convictions or of our conduct.

34. Another material part of this subject is that which connects itself with what are termed passive habits. The operations of these habits are those wherein the mind is excited by the presentation of the appropriate object, but does not carry out the movement into the corresponding action. For instance, when we see a duty, are reminded of it by something presented to the sight, and yet omit to do it; or when we see an object of pity, are moved by it, and yet, having the ability, do not administer relief; or when we see an object of desire, and, desiring it, are unable to arrive at it. This last case is mentioned for the purpose of showing that it is not really, though it is

formally, in point, and though it falls within the denomination of passive habits; for the mental act of volition undoubtedly takes place, though the external consequences are barred by obstructions that we are unable to remove; but in the previous cases, which are properly in point, that act of volition is as undoubtedly withheld, and practice is not contemplated at all. From this trifling with our nature and with its Maker, arises, as Bishop Butler has wisely shown, a deadening influence, by reaction upon the emotions themselves, and a diminution of their real liveliness and power. Now here we find one of the special dangers to which the action of the understanding exposes us. The emotion, considered singly, will carry us forward to action in its own line, with a force proportioned to its own; but it is the intervention of other faculties, absorbing and exhausting it on the way, which defeats its purpose.

35. When, for instance, it is aroused, but aroused by a spectacle in which are combined with the cause of our emotion, accessories addressing themselves more powerfully to the fancy or the imagination than the cause of emotion addresses itself to the heart—then, because one faculty at a time is apt to take the lead and govern the action of the man, the imagination or the fancy, being more powerfully stimulated, subordinates to itself that which is properly termed the feeling, and directs and attaches it to its own ends, which are not, directly at least, in the region of practice, but which consist in the erection of fabrics

having in the first instance, individually at least, subjective existence alone; and which are thereby distinguished from the understanding, which, in proportion as its action is legitimate, follows strictly, and ascertains the objective existences around us: *homo, naturæ minister et interpres.**

36. Thus a religious creed presented to the mind for its acceptance may be excluded from the heart if it so be that the imagination, unduly predominating over the mind of the man, interposes, and anticipating the torpid action of the affections, meets that creed, views it artistically, as it is termed, in the manner, that is to say, in which a workman would view a block of marble which he is about to reduce to shape; estimates it with reference not to its appointed ends, but to the law of beauty and its correspondence therewith, or discrepancy therefrom.

37. But the imagination is not the only interceptor of affections divinely destined to the purposes of action. The understanding may be excited simultaneously, and when set to work in reasoning upon the relations of any given phenomena, or upon reducing them into a system, it may thus, with speculative truth for its end, be so delighted with its own energies as to lead us into forgetfulness of action. Thus it absorbs in intellectual exercise the strength that ought to have been spent in practical exertion; and while it seems to be doing the work of the affections it diverts them from their own end, em-

* Novum Organon, aph. i.

ploying all the mental powers in the verification of terms instead of the execution of acts, and then applying them to its own work of classifying, comparing, concluding, or otherwise as the case may be. Thus again, when a religious creed is presented, say to a disputatious and subtle mind, in which the action of the critical faculty overbears and absorbs all other energies, that faculty regards the creed proposed polemically, considers it with reference to logical and technical precision, and not in respect to its moral characteristics and tendencies, and wastes upon this theoretic handling of sacred themes all the sedulity which ought to be employed in seeking to give effect to the proffered means of spiritual amelioration.

38. Now the bearing of these facts upon our subject is most weighty. If the understanding is neither able to dispense with the aid of the affections, nor in itself sufficient to stimulate them for the purposes of practice—if it be so far from this that it may, on the contrary, often become their hinderer—then we cannot fail to see the religious importance of having some avenues to the affections otherwise than through argumentative methods, and with an intervention of intellectual powers as slight as can possibly be, in order that, of several fallible processes, each one may help to supply the defects or retrieve the errors of the others.

39. Again: the grand and ruling influences through which we are capable of being led towards religion, are the fear of punishment, the desire of enjoyment,

the love of goodness. Let us, by way of summing up the argument, consider how far each of these influences is made effective through the sole action of the understanding, and how far by the supply of impressions from the affections; and again, how far through those affections which are human, and how far through those which are themselves derivable only from a divine influence.

40. Now the fear of punishment, in the gross or in the detail, may doubtless be made operative through our human affections, which recoil from pain as such, and with a consciousness of its general nature; aided by the understanding, which supplies the notion of power on the part of the Deity to make that punishment sensible and effective; but this fear of punishment is no genuine religion—it is no more than a still distant stage on the road to it; and as it may be felt without spiritual influence, so we have further to remember that it may be entirely overborne and nullified by the force of the temptations which it attempts to resist. There remains therefore a lack that requires to be supplied. But even for this partial influence the understanding alone is insufficient: it depends, in part, upon that apprehension of punishment which our natural susceptibilities, and not the proper energies of the understanding, supply; and therefore an argument may be drawn from this quarter, not perhaps strictly for the necessity of spiritual grace, but at all events against the sufficiency and so the sole jurisdiction of the understanding.

41. The desire of enjoyment, in the gross, may be impressed through the same human means: the first, of affection and understanding at work jointly; the second, of understanding alone. But as we go into detail, and come to inquire after any intimation of the nature of the proposed enjoyment which the Gospel offers, our human faculties fail us because we infer—as far as we can infer at all—that it is such as our human faculties cannot receive or appreciate, but would even be inclined of themselves to reject. We therefore need, in order to feel the full force of a view of heaven offered to us, to have an affection towards God of veneration, love, and trust, which our corruption has absorbed. This then is from a divine source: so that we now need not only the understanding and the affections, but likewise renewed affections to initiate the truly religious principle; and we accordingly see with much more strength and clearness the need of a divine operation other than that which the understanding carries, in order to set the understanding itself in motion towards God.

42. Thirdly, as regards the love of goodness for its own sake. For this we must be able to recognise the divine will as good in itself, and as determining what is good for us, independently of, or in opposition to, any estimate of our own. It is clear that this love, fixed on goodness as an end, and viewing goodness as embodied in, and as measured and tested by the will of God, is the adoption of an entirely new standard, of which our fallen state supplies none of the elements;

and the primary conception of the object, as it is an object of affection, must be in the affections, antecedent to any action of the understanding which acts only upon what is already conceived. It must therefore, in its earliest beginnings, under the strictest necessity, come from a divine influence, and not through the understanding.

43. Let us now look to apostolic practice and argument. Our proposition, be it remembered, is that those who are clear and determined in their repudiation of the theory which avowedly makes every man's natural understanding the arbiter of Christian doctrine, are yet, there is reason to apprehend, apt in many cases to fall into the Manichean notion, or to approximate towards it, which makes intellectual conviction upon the immediate subject matter of a proposition a necessary precondition of legitimate belief in it. There are many such persons, who are not consistent in this matter with themselves; for after renouncing the authority of the understanding, in the attempt to convert a man to Christianity, or to awaken him from spiritual torpor, and while fully recognising in words the doctrine of spiritual grace, and that too with entire sincerity of heart, they proceed by the way of argument upon each of the doctrines of Christianity, singly and independently regarded. They are doubtless right in arguing, as St. Paul did with the Athenians; but he used only those topics which were common to his audience and to himself. But did St. Paul, or did any of the apostles in any

recorded case, attempt to produce in the minds of those to whom they preached a distinct intellectual perception of each of what we now term the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel, or even of each of those contained in its first and simplest symbol, the Apostles' creed?

44. No: but apparently having set forth Jesus Christ as the Saviour of the awakened sinner, in the case of the gaoler at Philippi; or as the desired Messiah, in the case of the Ethiopian eunuch, and of the multitude at Jerusalem; or having explained the providence of God, like St. Paul at Athens; or the law of plain moral duty, appreciable even by the natural conscience, and enforced by the terrors of future judgment, like the same apostle with Agrippa, they allowed this call to take effect in producing (or not, as the case might be) such a measure of obedience as was answerable to the light already received; but instead of first carrying through the entire process of intellectual conviction, and then introducing the sacrament of baptism as its witness, sign, or seal merely, they appear, on the first movement of a determinate character, determinate, that is in the heart, though attended with very incomplete knowledge in the understanding, to have brought the convert to a participation of those directly divine influences which the sacrament conveyed. Thus they wrought by the understanding as far as it would carry them by its natural light, or by grace already infused, or fear awakened; but having done so, they strove immedi-

ately to bring to bear the distinct and effectual grace of the covenant upon the heart, proceeding upon the principle of training and moving the whole man by a parallel process, instead of working by one part of his nature exclusively, and of imposing upon that part a duty of which it was utterly incapable.

45. Surely we have a most vivid exemplification of this method in the case of the disciples at Ephesus,* who had been baptized unto John's baptism, and who had not so much as heard whether there were any Holy Ghost. St. Paul does not appear to have given them an elaborate and detailed exposition of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, but he directed them simply to a belief in Jesus as the end of John's baptism, and then baptized them in His holy name. By that baptism, as is evident from the passage, the Holy Ghost was set before them as an object of faith; but surely no one can infer from the sacred narrative that they were argumentatively taught the nature and attributes of the Holy Ghost. This full instruction was reserved for their Christian state. Why, but because spiritual influence upon the heart is necessary to furnish the understanding with those primary perceptions by which we become adequately cognisant of spiritual objects, and capable of exercising that faculty with profit upon the Christian doctrines at large?

46. We fall then into error, and desert the way of God's appointment, if we attempt to furnish the understanding of a heathen with a complete Christian

* Acts xix. 1—5.

armoury before operating upon the heart by those means which transcend it as well as by those which are akin to it; and the error into which we fall is rationalistic; we assume the competency of the understanding to do that which is beyond its function: or, more properly, we assume the fitness of the actual and fallen human nature to do that which is contrary to its fixed bias and deliberate preference. We attempt to perform God's work, but we make the attempt, taking to our aid only a part of the resources which He has supplied for the purpose. We argue—it is well; we pray—it is well; we conjure him with whom we are concerned to pray, to read, to reason; all this is well; but the truth we have here to regard is this: that when once that disposition on his part has been indicated which would lead him to pray, to read, and to reason, then he is in a temper of obedience and submission, he has the prerequisites for further spiritual grace, and the way to enable him to pray, to read, and to reason with effect, is to induce him to become partaker of the remaining, the crowning means, namely the sacrament appropriate to his case.

47. I have thus endeavoured to illustrate the argument from the practice of the Apostles with regard to unbaptized persons; let us now see whether it does not derive a light equally instructive from their method of addressing the members of the Church, those to whom in their several stages of spiritual advancement they administered the "principles" or the "perfection" of Christian doctrine. Let us see whether St. Paul

does not use something more than an appeal to motives in the ordinary sense: *i. e.* to objects which, though calculated to influence us, are nevertheless extrinsic to the man himself, such as for instance are a heaven and a hell.

48. Yes; his appeal is directly made, not merely to that which lies without the man, but to the constitution of the man himself. And again, not merely to the fragments and ruins of the primeval image of holy love and simple dependence, but likewise to the lineaments and forms already impressed upon him, and to the principle of growth living within him, in order to its full restoration. As he informs us that the word preached does not profit if not mixed with faith in them that hear it, thus proving the necessity of an inward and transcendant operation; so he impels rather than persuades his Christian brethren to right practice, by drawing the fountain-head of his argument from within them—"Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth."* Again: "How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein."† And, "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body."‡ And St. Peter: "Pass the time of your sojourning here in fear . . . . . seeing ye have purified your souls . . . . . love one another with a pure heart fervently, being born again, not of corruptible seed

* Col. iii. 3, 5. † Rom. vi. 2. ‡ Rom. vi. 11.

but of incorruptible."* Thus the sacred writers make a work which is not of the understanding, a ground—for what? for excluding the operation of that faculty? No, certainly; but for producing it; while the proof of that work, that primary super-intellectual work, remains indisputably clear; and while it, and not any process of the intellect, is always represented as the basis of Christian character and action.

49. We see then from the above doctrine of simple ideas, that if we admit the fall and corruption of human nature, we must also admit a spiritual influence independent of the understanding. If, upon the other hand, we set out denying the corruption of the human will, we may easily set down spiritual influence as a superfluity in our scheme of religion. And having thus placed on the right hand and on the left, these two separate views of religion, do we not see how necessary it is to maintain the notion of an influence conveyed to the heart otherwise than through mere teaching, however sound (which is in effect the same thing as to say, the notion of something beyond orthodox doctrine), if we would preserve a true view of human nature, without which true view of human nature, we cannot measure the ground we have to traverse in order to arrive at righteousness. And conversely, when a belief in the necessity of influences beyond and distinct from orthodox doctrine is weak and on the wane, and when orthodox doctrine, in its popular but perhaps narrow sense, is regarded as the

* 1 Pet. i. 17, 22, 23.

alpha and omega of Christianity; again, I ask, do we not see that we are upon the verge of losing our true conception of the extent of the universal human disease, and therefore of the remedy which it requires?

50. But we may call, and call loudly, upon those who have accustomed themselves to regard orthodoxy (in the sense specified) as the highest characteristic and surest guarantee of the Christian life, if they value either the truth of religion or the force and consistency of their own arguments, to join with us against rationalism in all its forms, and especially against that its subtlest form which teaches or assumes that spiritual life can only be initiated through an intellectual process. They denounce, and justly denounce, the idea of converting men by merely preceptive teaching: the truth of moral maxims and their intrinsic beauty, say they, may be unquestionable, but you present them to a being whose percipient faculties are corrupt and who requires an antecedent spiritual influence to enable him to appreciate them. So far they are right; but are they not incorrect in imagining, that the presentation of doctrine to the understanding (for to the understanding in the first instance it presents itself) is the sole and sufficient guarantee divinely appointed for the realisation of that spiritual influence? If truth of a less immediately practical nature may convey it,—*i. e.* truth of doctrine, why may not the more immediately practical—*i. e.* the preceptive truth convey it also? Why may not the precept carry with it the power of its own accomplishment, as well as the

doctrine carry with it the disposition for its own reception and likewise the power of accomplishing the precept?

51. If they establish a title as against Sacramental influences, which some may deride as mystical, they cannot establish one in sound argument against moral teaching, which they suspect as rationalistic; for such a title must be grounded on the general prerogatives of truth; and on its affinity to the understanding, as subject matter to an instrument appointed for working on it. Such a title will evidently include moral teaching as a positive channel of grace; they cannot find any distinction which shall shut it out. Then will arise the danger which I have striven to exhibit; in the active and robust play of the intellect, the more delicate conception of divine influence will be lost. Why will they not use the security, which God in his wisdom has provided for them, by constructing separate vehicles of an influence quite distinct from the understanding, and therefore permanent witnesses of its independent essence?

52. The reader is earnestly requested to remember, that the drift of these observations is simply to provide against our letting slip any one of the guarantees, which Divine mercy has afforded us against the fatal inroads of rationalism. To this end we should strenuously maintain the necessity of Christian doctrine, and of its being received even when beyond our power of comprehension. In order however to make this principle effectual and fruitful, it must ever be

borne in mind that such doctrine must not be filtered and strained through any medium of human invention; its vitality is not in its terms; it is in spiritual grace attending it, as soul resides in a body; but because in the case of teaching, the soul is more likely to be confounded with the body and the distinct perception of it absorbed, therefore we find (as will hereafter be more fully shown) a singular, though secondary, use of the Sacraments to be, their tendency to preserve the vitality of Christian doctrine by exhibiting the union of that soul with another body, from which it is so obviously distinct that we are in less danger of confounding them. And because the proper action of the Sacraments is direct upon the affections, it has been endeavoured in strict connexion to show that the affections and not the understanding of a man are the basis, and afford the chief criterion, of our religious state. Were they not so, the notion of grace inherent in these holy institutions would be exploded. But when we have well studied and appreciated the real function of the affections in religion, and have clearly noted the lines which divide it from the province of the understanding, the reception of these truths opens the way for our apprehending what more immediately belongs to the Sacraments themselves.

53. Finally let it be observed that these truths, if such they be, as we believe them, are not matter accessible only by long trains of argument, or to minds familiar with speculation; but are a part of the public patrimony of the people of God, being intervoven with the whole fabric of the sacred Scriptures. On the

one hand we hear of the evil *heart*, the hardened *heart*, the fool that said in his *heart* there was no God. On the other, of turning the *hearts* of the disobedient, of God's opening the *heart* of Lydia, of his writing his laws in the *hearts* of men, of putting a new *heart* and a right spirit within them. In conformity wherewith we pray in the Church, "Lord incline our *hearts* to keep this law," and yet there is no discrepancy, in the view of Scripture, between this use of the heart and the functions of the understanding; for we also read in St. Luke, chap. xxiv. v. 45, of the Redeemer's opening the *understanding* of his disciples; so as on the one hand their union is not overlooked, on the other their distinctness is preserved; as when St. Paul desires men to sing with the *heart* and with the *understanding* also; and again, just before the verse last cited from St. Luke, the disciples "said one to another, Did not our *heart* burn within us . . . while he opened to us the Scriptures?"

54. It has been only our indolence and corruption which, oscillating perpetually between contrary extremes, only alike in being each vicious, has imagined, and in ourselves has formed a notion of opposition between the prerogatives of the understanding and those of the heart, which has no truth in the nature of things, but which has become but too true, relatively to us. The Manicheans are alleged to have taught that knowledge, or intellectual comprehension, was a necessary precondition of right belief in any given proposition which purported to belong to the Christian Revelation. And St. Augustin, condemning this prin-

ciple as heretical, both in his writings against their opinions, and elsewhere, reverses the position. *Differat intellectum et incipiat a fide.** *Credidimus et cognovimus*, he observes, in the natural order, not *cognovimus et credidimus.*† It has been reserved for modern days to draw into the light and to exalt for worship that false opinion which in earlier ages skulked into obscurity, and only came to its followers as it were by night, that radical principle of all heresy, which teaches that we are to accept, as parts of revelation, or to reject, as spurious, any doctrine claiming to be of Christian faith, according to our own judgment of its reasonableness. It is truly the one, essential, universal, determining characteristic of heresy, that it subordinates the faith to human nature, instead of yielding up human nature to the faith. We are haunted and infected by this pernicious error in a thousand forms, some of them more virulent and some more mild. But for its counteraction we must establish the opposite principles, that the authority of revelation is independent of our assent; that the heart must be rectified in order that it may not mislead the understanding; that we must not only hold truth, but hold it as truth, value it, that is primarily, for what it is in itself, and not for what it is to us; or we shall assuredly let it slip. And if I have here dwelt but little on the value and need of the exercise of the understanding in religion, and have been content with merely admitting that it has a full recognition in Scripture, it is not from any

* Exp. in Ev. Joan. Tr. xiv. † Ibid. Tr. xxvii.

disposition to estimate it lightly, but from the belief that to the theory at least of this portion of duty the mind of the Church is in the present day sufficiently alive; it is, therefore, as it seems to me, by showing what the understanding cannot do, what is the proper work of the affections, that we shall best restore a due sense of the harmony of revelation upon this subject; and it is matter of no small difficulty to recover the full sense of that harmony when it has been suffered to decay.

55. In such difficulty, there are the signs of a righteous retribution: from the ease of habitual possession and open undisputed access, there is ever apt to grow a carelessness of mind respecting truth; and so the grasp of it is gradually loosened, and its singleness and unity disregarded, until at length, as our slumber deepens, some portion of it is perhaps even wholly resigned. And then comes the necessity of effort to recover the lost idea, and with that effort many accompanying dangers. Not the danger alone of failure, by faintness in toil or difficulty of the task, but the danger, too, of distorting the proportions and mutilating the parts of that truth in the attempt to replace it, a process in itself unnatural, though aiming at and tending towards that which is natural: next, the danger of alarming others by the aspect of innovation which our ignorance ascribes to resuscitated antiquity: and last, yet not least, the danger of presuming that we are creators or discoverers, when we are at the very best but employed in clearing away the

mould and dirt which has gathered through tract of time about the letters that are graven with a pen of iron in the rock for ever.

56. As the chapter which is now at length drawing to a close is intended to serve as a key to the general tone of argument in which in subsequent parts of this volume the subjects of the visible Church, of the Apostolical Succession, and of the Sacraments, are discussed, it may perhaps be well to present a brief summary of its principles and conclusions, which are mainly these. That rationalism is generally taken to be a reference of Christian doctrine to the human understanding as its measure and criterion. That, in truth, it means a reference of the Gospel to the depraved standard of the actual human nature, and by no means to its understanding, properly so called, which is an instrumental faculty, and reasons and concludes upon the Gospel according to the mode in which our affections are disposed towards it. That the understanding is incompetent to determine the state of the affections, but is, on the contrary, governed by them in respect to the elementary ideas of religion. That, therefore, to rely upon the understanding, misinformed as it is by depraved affections, as our adequate instructor in matter of religion, is most highly irrational. That, without any prejudice to these conclusions, the understanding has a great function in religion, and is a medium of access to the affections, and may even correct their particular impulses.

57. That consequently upon the foregoing principles, the natural entry of grace into the soul of man is through the affections, and anterior to the action of the understanding upon the subject. As, therefore, it is rationalistic to say, Christian doctrine must be true or false, according as it is agreeable or repugnant to our natural perceptions, so also is it rationalistic to trust exclusively to teaching as an instrument of salvation: or to maintain that intellectual apprehension is a necessary or invariable precondition of spiritual agency upon the soul. That as the need and the applicability of Divine influences are so large in extent and embrace so many more persons than possess an active understanding, the rationalism which makes these influences dependent on doctrine only as the medium of their conveyance to men, is exceedingly dangerous to Christianity. That by all these considerations we are prepared to anticipate, in a religion having the wide scope of the Gospel, some distinct provision for the conveyance of grace otherwise than through the understanding or in connexion with its agency; and some rites or institutions which should both convey grace in this separate and transcendant manner, and likewise mark, to the view of men, in the most forcible manner, the distinctness of these channels; and the complex and mystical constitution of all religious ordinances whatever, as consisting of an outward representation or instrumentality, and an inward living power.

CHAPTER III.

THE CHURCH.

Quod autem socialem volunt esse vitam sapientis, nos multo amplius approbamus. —S. Aug. de Civ. Dei, xix. 5.

Es ist dem religiösen leben wesentlich, ein leben in der gemeinschaft zu seyn. —Rothe, Anfänge der Christlichen Kirche, i. 1.

1—15. Ethical and analogical presumptions. 16—19. Some popular notions. 20. Not recognised by the Church of England. 21—9. Outline of Scripture doctrine. 30—40. Objections to the interpretation. 41—5. Actual deviation, and its causes. 46—71. Advantages of return. 72, 73. Argument applicable in degree to particular Churches. 74—82. Objections considered. 83. Conclusion.

1. The Redeemer of the world bequeathed to men the new principle of life which He had realized in His own humanity, and a body of laws by which that principle of life should be guided. It was an inward life, having its first and main aspect towards God.

2. Yet, however, in its origin strictly spiritual,* it was applicable not to the spirit alone, but to all the parts of the mixed human nature: inasmuch as He came to redeem the whole man in the full extent of his need; and the body had been a sufferer by sin as well as the soul, and, like the soul, needed redemption. Therefore, because this principle of life is intended to effect the entire renovation of man, it must be represented to his bodily as well as to his mental organs:

* Rothe, Anfänge der Christlichen Kirche, i. 1.

and for that purpose it requires some form of external development.

3. It could not reasonably be anticipated that the disease of human nature which exists alike in his material and his spiritual functions, should be cured by a process addressed to his immaterial part alone. The form of temptation, whereby he was originally seduced, partook of the appeal to both. The resulting evil abides in both. The connexion of the two is so close and subtle that no one can discern the demarcating lines. The reciprocal influences of one upon the other are so abundant and constant both ways, that we are at a loss to conceive how they could be rectified by a power operating only in the one current, and leaving unregarded the other.

4. But, further, it is true even of every purely inward principle of that nature, (as love, pity,) that it struggles for an outward development,—and the more strongly in proportion to its own proper strength. It is the law of the growth of man that the acts which he does shall themselves re-act upon, expand, confirm, and accomplish that constitution from which they proceeded. Therefore his internal principles expand themselves in acts, by no vague, arbitrary movement, but in order to their own increase and perfection. This effort for external manifestation begins perhaps in strictness, whenever the principle comes to be placed objectively before the conscience. And the internal principle is not a loser by that which it seems to spend in external operation, but positively gains by

it. The religious life is the highest form of the rational and moral life, and therefore, if it be healthy, strives with the greatest force for external expression, in order, through the medium of acts, to accomplish and consummate itself in the resulting habits, and thus in the general structure of the character.

5. Each inward principle of human nature seeks for expression in an outward, active existence, not only for its own consummation, but also in order that it may be expansive, communicative. We are to bear one another's burdens. Each of us is to care not only for his own concerns, but for those also of his brethren. The principle of this care is the same, whether it be applied to ourselves or to others,—"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself:" though the degree may be different. The subjective basis of this duty is indicated by the common and established doctrine that our nature is social and sympathetic. External development is the necessary result of this social and sympathetic law,—the essential condition of its fulfilment.

6. Further, a large part of our necessary action in life, independently of the positive desire to propagate religion, and to be at one therein with our brethren, is relative, has influence for good or for evil upon their condition as well as our own; and in order that such influence may be determined to good, and not to evil, the power of Christian religion, of the new principle of life bequeathed by the Redeemer, must be applied to it: and thus, in the whole of such applica-

tion to external conduct, that inward spiritual principle receives external form.

7. But this external development requires limitation as well as scope. Because this expansive, communicative tendency is, in a being of disordered and unruly will, prone especially to derange his relations with his fellows. Therefore, in order to regulate its action, the limiting schemes of communities, civil and religious, are required. And those schemes will surely restrain the irregularities of human nature more effectually when the main lines of the institution are divine, than when, seeming to have been originally drawn at man's own discretion, they seem likewise, by consequence, alterable according to the unrestricted dictates of the same: and this principle is true and sound in a due proportion, although it may demand qualification at the point when it meets and is modified by other principles, which contemplate other kinds of discipline and advantage, to accrue to man through the exercise of a regulated liberty in the discernment and settlement of details. Thus it may fairly be urged, that the exercise and growth of faith might be hindered, and the analogies of the Divine government would apparently be violated, if a system of the minutest points were literally revealed. But the fixing of principles by revelation leaves ample scope for faith.

8. As, for civil order, no man would deem it sufficient that a code of written laws should be promulgated, and their interpretation and application left to the private spirit, so neither does it antecedently appear

enough for the regulation of the expansive tendency and relative functions of the religious life, that a written law of God should exist. The necessity of our nature seems to demand a corresponding Divine interpretation for the administration of the Divine law. For if, on the other hand, the interpretation of controuling laws be left simply to each individual, their effect will be nominal and nugatory. Or, further, if each individual, instead of interpreting directly for himself, be morally justified in choosing his own interpreter of the civil laws, irrespectively of any general consent or of anything but his own impressions, and be legally entitled so to make a selection, the result will be little better: nay worse in one respect, because he will then seem to himself to have the sanction of authority. Upon these grounds, then, our reasonable anticipation would be, not only that institutions should exist in order to the general and systematic application of Divine laws, but likewise that such institutions should correspond in origin with the laws themselves, and that both should come from God. Further, that as in the case of the rules of Scripture for personal conduct, we find clear and broad enunciation of principles with little of minute specification, so also with regard to any institution which might be ordained for the preservation and propagation of Christianity, as we should according to reason expect principles to be revealed for our guidance, we should similarly expect details to be left indeterminate for our exercise.

9. Further, religion contemplates and ordains the

co-operation of individuals for a common end: not their unconscious, but their designed and deliberate co-operation in the government and extension of the kingdom of Christ, and the maintenance of His truth, a perpetual system of joint and organised action. But there can be no such co-operation on a permanent footing, and on an effective scale, except through the medium of some institution whereinto individuals are introduced by some known and palpable method, which, in order to be known and palpable, must have outward form: and wherein also they remain under common laws, which laws must have application to other than merely inward and mental acts: otherwise the reality of the bond of union could not be ascertained, nor any substantive result secured.*

10. A similar presumption would be raised by including within our view the other less directly Divine dispensations under which we live. Civil society, for example, is an ordinance of God. After we have put aside all questions upon particular forms of government, there remains, at least by nearly universal consent, this principle,—that our combination together in nations and polities, and our relation of subjection, as individuals, to the authority of a government, are parts and features of our condition, as men, which must be referred immediately to the will of our Maker.† And this will necessarily implies an outward representation of the governing principle in some kind of

* Rothe, I. 4.

† As much as this is I think admitted by Algernon Sidney in his work on Government.

governing body. But the most remarkable example of the provision of an external form as a tabernacle for an inward principle, is that of the family. Here the whole authority originally was, and the chief part of it still is, a living and (in an inoffensive sense) an arbitrary authority: and here the union and interdependence of our interests and concerns, of our whole being as human creatures, is most vividly exemplified. We might have been appointed to come into existence each springing separately from the dust whereof we are made, and each receiving individually the breath of the Divine Spirit into his nostrils. Instead of which it has pleased the Father of us all that we should be a race, produced in the way of natural propagation one from another: around this function are clustered our tenderest and most inward and permanent affections: to it belong the most complex reciprocal offices, reaching over long periods of our life, and generally succeeding and replacing one another throughout the whole or the greater part of its course: thus the principle of communion amongst men is carried into the most minutely ramified intermixture. And in a still larger sense, the whole of our human condition which lies beyond its domestic and political relations, is also eminently social. Interests and attachments are inseparably intertwined: the actings and sufferings of each one are made in a very great degree dependent on the actings and sufferings of others. From all these arrangements, therefore, by which we are not separately but socially constituted

under the Divine ordinance, the presumption is raised that we shall find the same social constitution, the same principle of visible intercommunion in any scheme which God may have established for our spiritual recovery and development.

11. From the history of all other religions the same analogy is derivable. They, whether true or false,—whether resting on the basis of revelation, like the patriarchal and the Jewish forms,—or whether depraved remnants of primeval knowledge, with large supplements of erroneous invention, devised by the craft of political or sacerdotal ambition, have corresponded in this one respect, that, in order to permanence and practical application, they have ever been embodied in an outward development of rites and of social institutions, claiming a Divine origin. Schemes of speculative opinion, indeed, have been propagated from age to age without any such regular organisation: they live chiefly by the delight of the human understanding in the exercise of its intellectual energies: and they have no practical system to carry into effect. They, however, rarely maintain for a great length of time a continuous existence. But where, whether by piety or by superstition, the object has been to impose restraints upon human nature, the aids of system and organised combination claiming to be Divine, have never been neglected; that is to say, in all the forms, theological or mythological, which have ever exercised any large sway for any considerable period over portions of the human race. Universal

experience, therefore, teaches us the conduciveness of fixed institutions to the maintenance of religion, and thereby leads us to expect that, in a revelation from God to man, some such institutions will be included.

12. Again, it may be worth while to consider whether the promulgation of a religion hostile to the actual tendencies of human nature, and to the powers of the world, might not, it being first given that its permanent existence should be maintained upon a principle of faith and not of sight, that is, not of the continual interposition of supernatural power, require as a further condition that it should be embodied in a visible institution. There the faith might dwell as in a house; there recover and refresh itself after the rude shocks of persecution: there diffuse the vital warmth through all its members, which they should spend in their common and habitual life: there gather its energies for fresh aggression upon the kingdom of darkness. And thus it would appear upon consideration of the foes who were ever ready to assail the religion of Christ from without, that it required the fortress of a fixed and Divine institution for its abode.

13. And if we are led to anticipate the foundation of such an institution from considering the extrinsic difficulties with which the religion was destined to contend, much more may it be asked, how was a scheme, which had no natural home prepared to welcome it within the human heart, to fix itself permanently there? How, when the tenacious and desperate resistance which to the last is opposed to religion by

all the forms of inward sin is taken into view, can we suppose that it is permanently not only to remain but to triumph, and to expel all its foes from the heart of the individual? Much more still, how is it to pass from generation to generation? Individual zeal decays, or it is benumbed; or if the will remains the power of communication is obstructed or decayed by age and infirmity. Not from leaf to leaf is the sap given, but from the trunk. For the perpetual reproduction of the spiritual life in individuals there must be (as one should anticipate) a trunk, and that not only invisible, to be apprehended through the speculative faculties alone; but visible also, that as at every opening the soul of man is assailed, so through every avenue also which his faculties command, he may derive help in his spiritual warfare.

14. We must not, however, overrate the importance, or mistake the bearing, of arguments drawn like these from anticipation. Doubtless the omnipotence of grace is not tied to such methods as lie within our discernment; nor are we to affirm that it could not have discovered a thousand modes of preserving and transmitting the living legacy of the Redeemer, a spiritual principle, besides that of a permanent, visible institution. But I am now arguing not upon the theological proofs of the Divine establishment of such an institution: I am striving to show how it harmonises with our reason, fulfils our anticipations, satisfies the necessities which we see to have arisen, and to be likely evermore to arise. And when we see how in

all these various aspects the institution of a visible Church corresponded with the nature of the beings among whom the religion of Christ was to go forth and to conquer; how it overcame obstacles in our view insurmountable by any other means, supplied wants which we can discern no other mode of supplying; these facts do not indeed prove that God has founded such an institution, but they prove that if He has founded it, and if we are called upon to believe it, then we are called upon to believe what is not only not opposed, but what is eminently conformable to our own reasonable apprehension.

15. Thus, then, by examining the fixed conditions of our own nature and constitution, and some of the essential and of the circumstantial features of the Christian revelation, as well as the general results of experience, we are prepared to recognise an adaptation to our own knowledge and reasonable anticipations in that representation of Christianity, which exhibits it as a revelation, comprising in itself not only a body of Divine truths, but also an institution in which those truths are preserved, professed, perpetuated in the world, and brought to effect by spiritual ordinances in the hearts and lives of men. And this is no other than an outline of the doctrine of the Visible Church, contained in that Article of the Creed where we specify our belief in "the Holy Catholic Church;" in "one Catholic and Apostolic Church."

16. He who reads the Scriptures diligently and as a whole, and who regards the Epistles with that parti-

cular kind of attention which belongs to them as being the part of our religious code which was produced when the Church was in actual and progressive operation, can hardly fail to be struck with the difference between their tone respecting the Ecclesia, or Church, and that of modern teachers in general. For what are our ideas of a Church? The Romanist, indeed, has for his part a conception which, upon other grounds, we may regard as either wholly or partially unscriptural; but which at least does not fall short in magnitude and importance of that which the Apostles appear to have entertained. But of those who are included in the wide designation of Protestants, one not inconsiderable sectarian portion regards each particular congregation as in the strictest and highest sense a Church; and holds that such a body should acknowledge on earth no authority superior to its own; and should, in its relations with other Churches, behave as a sovereign independent power. There is little room left, under these conditions, for attaching any palpable or substantive meaning to that ancient and venerable designation, so frequently recurring in our public services, "the Catholic Church."

17. But others of us, too, have our besetting sin in this matter: it is of an Erastian colour. These are too apt to view the Church as founded simply upon the law and will of the State, and as deriving its entire authority, and not only its civil rights and temporal jurisdiction, from that source. Many of us forget the undoubted historical fact, that the Church of Christ

had a vital and visible organisation of its own as a body, not only independent of, but long antecedent to, that of any now existing State with which it is in connection. Religion, indeed, as an individual concern, is not regarded by persons of this class as dependent on civil law; but then it is also considered very much as independent of and anterior to the Church. This they view as being in regard to individuals a sort of voluntary combination, not binding upon the conscience, but rather framed at their discretion upon grounds of Christian expediency; in regard to the governing power, an institution erected and proposed to the people for their use upon grounds both of duty and of policy, dispensing to the people certain truths and ordinances of Divine authority, but by a machinery which is of human sanction, and is subject to be varied or removed as human authority may resolve. I do not mention this as a theory formally drawn out, or consistent with itself; but as merely giving the sum of those vague impressions which exist, unexamined and unproved, yet practically influential, in many minds regarding the nature of the Church.

18. There cannot be a more marked illustration of the extreme laxity of our principles in this important respect than the very frequent use of the term Church as synonymous with the clergy, and of the phrase going into the Church, although this be not without the countenance of authority, as equivalent to receiving holy orders; whereas the candidate for holy orders is just as truly in the Church as their possessor. And

yet it is probable that not only does this verbal fallacy circulate very commonly undetected, but that the simple consideration which suffices to expose it would not always be recognised with ease, as proposing a truth incapable of dispute. There are other uses of the word as inaccurate. We speak of going to church, meaning ordinarily no more than the Sunday service. "Is church over?" would be said for, "Is the service over?" This is not a mere verbal remark. Human language is the most copious and most accurate witness to human inconsistency and error: to it we, as it were, confide our secrets; we make it the depository of our thoughts, and, when subjected to patient and searching scrutiny, it reveals them such as they were given into its custody. The misuse of a term, in this and in ten thousand other instances, indicates a mental perversion. Here, for example, it is too closely connected with our individualism in religion, and indicates a sort of latent assumption that the Church has no permanent and corporate being of an independent kind, but only exists under particular conditions, or for particular seasons or functions, determinable by the will of individuals, and even as if depending on their local assemblages.

19. To show that the distinction taken in the last sentence is not unreal—for men will begin to deny what they have long forgotten or neglected—let us appeal to the nature of a family. That term indicates a bond of union, independent of and superior to the will of the persons composing it, and imposing obli-

gations upon them towards one another which they are bound to fulfil. The actual fulfilment may be occasional; but the law of fulfilment, and the institution to which the law is attached, have a permanent existence. So, like the family, the Church entails upon us, who are her children and members, obligations belonging to us as such; which we are not at liberty to disregard—which are not limited as are in many cases the terms of a voluntary combination—which, though they may be brought out into positive and formal actions, only from time to time, yet retain a real and a perpetual existence.

20. Although, however, our prevailing tone on the subject of the Church be so low, that some regard it as little more than a sort of religious club, yet in the institutions of that portion of the communion of saints to which we of this nation claim to belong, we find all the evidences and guarantees of a high, living, and fruitful doctrine. The State may cripple her action as it had indeed heretofore done, and it has almost annihilated her discipline, which it seems now to feel the duty of reviving; but it was surely under her protest, for she everywhere asserts her own functions as a mother to us all. She provides for us the ordinary services of her Liturgy, intended to be to us as our daily bread,

La cotidiana manna *
Senza la qual per quest 'aspro diserto
Di retro va chi più di gir s'affanna;

and she likewise furnishes those which are termed oc-

* Purgatorio, xi. 13.

casional, which mark the grand stages and seasons of life, to be thereby claimed for God; and both these classes of religious office she requires to be observed, with unimpaired authority, though it may be with mutilated and insufficient influence and power.

21. Does then the character assigned in Scripture to the Church accord best with the lofty principle, or with the degenerate practice? In answering this question let us observe, in the first place, that throughout the Old Testament, God is pleased to foreshow his elect not as the sum of a certain number of individuals taken here and there out of the mass, for each of whom he designs and contrives individual salvation; but in their corporate character, either under some single and personal image, as the King's daughter of the Psalms, and the Beloved of the Canticles; or under the figure of an object of magnitude, as the mountain; or of capacity to contain many, as the Lord's House, or the city of Jerusalem. The evident intention of all these kinds of figure is to draw us away from our spirit of self-regard, while the first of them specifically represents to us the intimacy of our union in the Church with the Redeemer; and the two latter our participation of character and privilege with many brethren.

22. If we look to the New Testament, in its very opening we find the coming dispensation always announced in its collective character. "Repent ye," said the Baptist, "for the kingdom of heaven is at

hand."* When Christ himself assumed the functions of the ministry, He commenced His preaching in the very same terms: "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."† At a subsequent period, when he commissioned his disciples to preach in Judea, his charge to them was in a strain precisely similar: "Go ye and preach, saying the kingdom of heaven is at hand."‡ To the individual confession of St. Peter our Lord responds, by the promise not that every soul making that confession shall be saved, but with a far wider scope, that upon this rock He will build his church. The same kingdom of heaven is the principal and nearly uniform antitype of His parables. When after the Resurrection He abode forty days with His disciples, and prepared them for their high office of propagating the Gospel and governing the Church, His speaking was of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.§ Why is it then that we deem this "kingdom of heaven" so secondary a representation of our religious life, while in the teaching of our Redeemer it is so prominent?‖

23. There is indeed another passage of Scripture where our Saviour says,¶ "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation; neither shall they say Lo here! or Lo there! for behold, the kingdom of God is within you:" and which might at first sight seem to indicate a different idea from that of the pub-

* Matt. iii. 2. † Matt. iv. 17. ‡ Matt. x. 7.
§ Acts i. 3. ‖ Rothe, Anfänge der Christlichen Kirche, i. 2.
¶ Luke xvii. 20, 21.

lic, universal, visible Church. But in truth there is no opposition. The Pharisees demanded of our Lord when the kingdom of God should come. He shows in His reply that the access of the religious system so represented as a kingdom to the individual, is, in the first instance, by means of an internal work; without which no man may enter therein. It is when the principle, by virtue of which we become obedient subjects of the kingdom of God, is already born within us,* that the corresponding outward development is required. And if this text were to receive an interpretation adverse to the doctrine of the visible Church at all, it would be likewise and equally adverse to all visible forms of the kingdom of God, in individuals and voluntary associations, as well as in the Church, which is evidently out of the question.

24. The commencement of the Lord's Prayer affords another striking instance of this principle. Connecting it with the directions immediately preceding it, (" but thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet," &c.) we must, of course, regard it as intended not alone for joint, but also, and that too primarily, for private devotion; and yet the address is, not " My," but " Our" Father. We are taught to call upon Him in this solemn and endearing exordium, not under the view of His personal love to each one of us, but in virtue of that bond of grace wherein we are all embraced. We may also remark by the way

* Rothe, Anfänge, i. 2.

how faithfully this unselfish character (for how easy it is to become selfish even in our prayers, and how wisely therefore does the Apostle St. Paul also* guard us against it by supplying directions in detail for our intercessory petitions) has been transfused into the tone and phraseology of the Christian Liturgies.

25. On this principle surely it was that our Lord in determining the form of that grand rite, which was to remain as an everlasting token among his disciples, and to convey to them the grace that should feed their spiritual existence, made choice of a supper, which is in its nature social, as the occasion of its institution. That grace might have been given through another medium; or the soul of one man might have received it independently of the souls of others; why then was a mode chosen which required the presence and participation of several? May we not answer, it was probably, in part at least, from the design of our Saviour to imprint strongly upon us our character as portions of a whole, that whole being the Church? Does not His solemn promise to hear the prayer of two or three point distinctly to the same end? Why of two or three? The prayer of one righteous man availeth much. It is not bare numerical multiplication which can give weight to our petitions. No; but Jesus Christ it seems has willed, that creatures, whose joys and sorrows, whose hopes and fears are the same, who are involved in a common ruin and are heirs of a

* 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2.

common recovery, should pray too with that unity of voice which belongs to their unity of spiritual existence and relationship to him.

26. It may next be observed that to the Church in general the promises of victory over the gates of hell,* and of the Lord's perpetual presence with her governors, belong.† So St. Paul writes to the community of the Corinthians,‡ which seems to have comprised offenders of almost every class, "who also shall confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." And to that of the Philippians,§ "being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." It is very instructive to compare the unqualified tone of these declarations respecting the blessedness of the Christian community, with the not faint nor desponding but yet more guarded terms in which St. Paul‖ writes of the salvation of an individual, although that individual was one so eminent for gifts and graces as himself.

27. The Church is the body of Christ,¶ for He is one body, having many members; into which we are all baptized by one spirit. And we "are the body of Christ, and members in particular."** Christ is "the head of the Church," "the Saviour of the body;"†† the spouse of the Church.‡‡ And she is "the

* Matt. xvi. 18. † Matt. xxviii. 20. ‡ 1 Cor. i. 8. § Phil. i. 6.
‖ Phil. iii. 11—14; 1 Cor. ix. 27.
¶ 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13. ** 1 Cor. xii. 27. †† Eph. v. 23, 32.
‡‡ Rev. xxi. 9

bride, the Lamb's wife,"* that longs for his coming. Again: "the bread, which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ; for we being many are one bread, and one body."† The house of God is "the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."‡ He that will not hear her voice in her discipline is to be regarded as an heathen man and a publican.§ And, finally, when her warfare is accomplished, the Redeemer will present her to His Father a glorious Church, holy and without blemish.‖

28. And this Church is called to unity; as the coat of the Lord was woven throughout without seam from top to bottom, even so "there shall be one fold and one shepherd."¶ "For," says St. Paul, "I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you."** And divisions were, according to the mind of this great Apostle, a sign of carnality; but is it not true that according to the mind of modern religion, an absolute indifference to them is too often regarded as a sign of spirituality? "For ye are yet carnal; for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal?"†† And it is obvious, that it was not merely an inward unison or concord which was contemplated by Him, for this reason as well as others, because such is not the natural signification of the terms used to denote

* Rev. xxii. 17. † 1 Cor. x. 16. ‡ 1 Tim. iii. 15.
§ Matt. xviii. 17. ‖ Eph. v. 27. ¶ Job. x. 16. ** 1 Cor. i. 10.
†† 1 Cor. iii. 3.

Christian unity. "We being many, are one body."* Christ is like the body integral, but compounded of many parts. The Redeemer reconciled Jews and Gentiles unto God in one body by the cross.† In order that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs and of the same body.‡ We are called to the law of peace in one body.§

29. The entire historical development of the institution of the Church, as recorded in the Acts, and as illustrated in the Epistles, is such as would occupy, if duly exhibited, considerable space. I cannot, however, refrain from quoting the verse which describes the state of things immediately after the first sermon of St. Peter, when the Christian society had now but just begun to act as an organized body. "And they continued stedfastly in the Apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."‖ Now the word here rendered fellowship is that which is elsewhere translated communion. Thus we have a most comprehensive and accurate description of all that essentially belongs to our habitual position as members of the Church: namely, to continue stedfastly in, or to cling stedfastly to (προσκαρτερεῖν) the doctrine or teaching (for we have not here that later sense of the Divine doctrine in which it is logically opposed to precept) of the Apostles; to the ecclesiastical fellowship or communion of the Apostles, to the

* 1 Cor. x. 17; xii. 12. † Eph. ii. 16. ‡ Eph. iii. 6. § Col. iii. 15.
‖ Acts ii. 42. See a Consecration Sermon by the Rev. E. B. Ramsay, Edinburgh, 1837.

celebration of the Lord's Supper, and to the observance of common worship. I am at a loss to know or conceive what description can, if Scripture be indeed written for our learning, more clearly prove that a visible Church was founded by the Apostles, or more authoritatively inculcate the duty of adhering strictly to that church which they so founded, as well as to that doctrine which they taught, and those public ordinances which they established and administered.

30. But shall it be objected that St. Paul is rebuking animosities and not outward distinctions; that "body" is in the teaching of the New Testament a metaphor, signifying a Church which is real but invisible? It is most clear that St. Paul rebukes both the spirit of bickering, and the fact of, or rather the tendency to, external division. Because in the passage already cited he clearly distinguishes them: "whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions," (διχοστασίαι, literally standings apart).* Because, further, the practice which he exemplifies ("one saith I am of Paul, and another, I of Apollos,") relates strictly to external division, and that too in an incipient state,† for St. Paul and Apollos were in the same body; but when men thus spoke they were evidently beginning to allow themselves in distinctions of Christian profession, and thus to break or endanger unity. Because, in enumerating the works of the flesh, he has names comprehending each form of of-

* 1 Cor. iii. 4.

† Sherlock on Religious Assemblies, Introduction.

fence against unity:* variance, emulations, wrath, strife, these have regard to breaches of the unity of the spirit; seditions, διχοστασίαι (or divisions, as the term is rendered in 1 Cor. i.) designating the infraction of unity of the body; heresies, denoting a similar rupture in respect of the unity of the Divine Truth committed to the Church.

31. But why is it unreasonable to resolve the term body into metaphor? Not only because we may think that the plain sense of Scripture precludes it, but further, also, because the whole primitive Church concurred in the literal sense. Because figurative interpretation, unless supported by the highest authority, or rather compelled by the necessity of the sense, is full of license and of hazard. Because the functions assigned to the Church, that for example of exercising discipline,† and that of exhibiting the truth like a pillar,‡ are manifestly attached to an institution or body. Because St. Paul, after giving to Timothy directions which evidently apply to the government of the visible Church, tells him that the Church in which these directions are meant for his guidance, is the pillar and ground of truth, that is to say undeniably, is also a spiritual Church. Because our Lord prays for the unity of his disciples, in order that the world may believe in the truth of his mission; but a mere invisible union would be only appreciated by saints, and would afford no evidence to the world.§ Because the unity of spirit

* Gal. iv. 19–21. † Matt. xvi. 19. ‡ 1 Tim. iii. 15. § John xvii. 17.

is in express terms distinguished from the unity of body by St. Paul. "For by one spirit are we all baptised into one body, ... and have been all made to drink into one spirit." * Because *even as* the hope of our calling is one, even so there is one body and one spirit, one faith, one baptism.† Because the early believers continued in the fellowship as well as the doctrine of the Apostles.‡

Nor let it be supposed that the passages here quoted afford anything like a full, though it is hoped they give for the present purpose a sufficient view, of that authority which Holy Scripture gives to the doctrines that the Church which inherits the promises of Christ, and which is declared by Scripture to be His body, is one, and is visible.

32. There is, however, another form of possible objection, which it may be well to notice. It may be argued that the condition of unity of body, which belongs to the Church, is satisfied by its actual state in the world; inasmuch as all who believe in Christ are called by a distinctive name, besides possessing that distinctive tenet, and are therefore one body, as contrasted with the rest of mankind; and that therefore no more was intended by the precept of unity in the body than the present state of Christianity fulfils.

33. But if we depend on Scripture for our authority, the answer is plain. We have seen that St. Paul would not tolerate in Corinth so much as the assumption of the names of particular teachers, although, so

* 1 Cor. xii. 13. † Eph. v. 4. ‡ Acts ii. 42.

far as we know, without any rupture of communion. What would he now behold? He would see that assumption of denominations from this and that man, which he forbade, often even attended with an apparently total unconsciousness of its opposition to the Divine commands. He would see those breaches of Christian communion which human corruption had not yet in his time engendered. He would hear a claim advanced from a thousand quarters to interpret the Scripture even on articles of faith, in a thousand different manners; and further, to reject its obvious and apparent sense, whenever it is contrary to what men term the dictates of their reason, which means, in effect, whenever it transcends the measure of our limited faculties. Was this the unity of body which he intended when he wrote that the body of the Church was one, in no vague or equivocal sense, but one even as was the hope of her calling?*

34. Again, if the Church be the pillar and ground of truth, if there be a promise that there shall always be a society visibly professing all things necessary to salvation, and if the body of the Church be commensurate with that visible profession, who can say that there could now be compiled any body of truths acknowledged by all the denominations that bear the Christian name, such as would present to view a religion distinguished from that of the rest of the world by other than nominal differences? Suppose Christ reduced to a mere humanity, His atonement denied,

* Eph. iv. 4.

the reality of spiritual grace, the original sinfulness of man, the eternity of future punishment rejected, as by the Unitarians, and the Sacraments taken away, as by the Society of Friends, what remains that can be said, without an insult to common sense, to constitute the religion, the one positive religion of Scripture?

35. But if the other alternative be taken, and if men say, excluding a few bodies of extreme opinions, the residue agree in the Articles of the Faith; without stopping to question this assertion, I observe, that if we cut off a certain number of those who are called Christians from the Church, we can no longer say with consistency, that the unity of the body of the Church is satisfied by the fact that one part of the world, as professing Christianity, is thereby distinguished from the residue of mankind who do not profess it.

I do not now inquire whether the principle of unity in the body is fully satisfied in the Church of Christ at this time upon earth, or whether unity prevails among all the parts of his true Church, be that Church what it may; but I here simply argue, that it clearly is not satisfied by the mere distinction of the Christian name. To constitute unity of body there must be some unity of law and of action; but this cannot exist where not only there is no unity of action, but no provision for it, and where the vital principles of the one part are not only not found, but blasphemed in the other part, so that if the one be life the other must be death.

36. Indeed it would suffice to rest the opposition to the notion that the unity of the Church designated

in the New Testament Scriptures is an invisible unity, on either of the two following grounds taken singly: First, we may challenge the proof from Scripture of any plurality of Churches, except such as is local only; of any such division as that of a present visible and a present invisible Church, differing in essence, the latter only possessing gifts, and the former but types and shadows of gifts, intended, as the theory teaches, to incite and awaken the minds of men. And then if it be admitted that Scripture designates but one present and general Church, the only resort for those who contend that that Church is invisible, is to have recourse to the expedient of figurative interpretation, on a scale fearfully extensive; an expedient undoubtedly sufficient for this purpose, or for any other mischievous perversion, sufficient to reduce the whole Bible to a practical nullity; an expedient of the readiest and most universal application, because any man may adopt it under the pressure of argumentative difficulty, with an absolute security, if he do but go far enough in its use, from detection. In its best and most substantial form this notion rests upon a confusion between the Church, which is a body of mixed composition, and the spiritual harmony or union which exists among all those who have a living faith in Jesus Christ.

37. Secondly, I think it might be fairly argued, that the very phrase "invisible Church," when it is applied to the Church militant here on earth, presents a contradiction in terms. That the Church is essentially visible. That its essence (unless we again employ

the aid of metaphor to escape from the plain meaning of terms) depends upon visible characteristics. That it is, in the nature of the thing, an institution furnished with outward badges and rites, and that no mere community of opinions can make an institution, though such a community may induce men to form one. And whenever men do attempt to embody the idea of a Church, the attempt assumes a form of visibility. Quakerism itself, which has been more consistent than any other system in following out the idea of the invisible Church, cannot exist without external signs, without some marks and bonds of association palpable to sense and to general experience, and it has found them in the conventional unities of dress. If, therefore, it be admitted (and who can deny it?) that the Apostles founded a Church, those who admit it are bound, in logical consequence, to admit its visibility.

38. And lastly, what objection so obvious or so popular as that which argues from the mixed character of the visible Church, composed as it is partly of conscientious and partly of unfaithful members, and with a great ostensible preponderance of the latter—that no body containing within itself so much pollution can be entitled to those lofty prerogatives which are given in scripture to the spouse of Christ? This is the plausible though most unscriptural argument, which has produced the greatest amount of delusion. And in accordance with this persuasion that the true Church cannot be recognised in the visible body, men proceed to seek for it elsewhere.

39. To this objection I would reply: first that we must put out of view such increase of scandal and ungodliness in the Church as has arisen from the relaxation of discipline, or from any local or temporary circumstances. But supposing discipline in the best state to which it has ever attained, it is clear, even one may say from the cases historically recorded in the New Testament, that the composition of the Church must ever be not only mixed, but so mixed that she does not even contemplate effecting on earth any thing like that final separation which must one day be made. Therefore, in the second place, we may, fairly, be called upon to justify this mixed condition from Scripture, and to shew that it answers to the idea there given of the Church. Which may easily be done. Why does our Lord refer to the day of judgment* as the period of separation, if that separation generally were to be made here? By the branches† which are in Him and yet which bear not fruit, and by those ministers of His power‡ and gifts who have wrought wonders in His name and yet shall be finally cast out, and by the participation of Judas Iscariot in the ministrations of His Apostles, He shews us that a continual indwelling of unholy members was contemplated in the Providential view of the Church. The parable of the net having good fish and bad: § of the tares mixed with the wheat in the field,‖ indicate yet more determinately the same state of things. The Church (ἐκκλησία) is of

* Matt. xxv. 32. † Joh. xv. 2. ‡ Matt. vii. 22.
§ Matt. xiii. 47—51. ‖ Matt. xiii. 24—30, and 36—43.

the called (κλητοὶ); and they are many: but few are chosen.* "The Lord knoweth them that are His." From all which, it is fairly to be inferred that the discipline of the Church was not designed to aim at anything like an effectual and entire separation corresponding with the final one.

40. Now if this representation should shock the preconceptions and stagger the faith of any man in the promises of Christ respecting the Church, I would appeal to every one of humble heart and thoughtful mind, and ask him whether the paradox be not as evidently striking in the case of the individual—or his own experience can have taught him nothing—as it is in the case of the body. If the contrast be wide between the high privileges and destinies of the Church on the one hand, and that inward state where evil continually contends for and at times seems well nigh to obtain the mastery: is there not in miniature precisely the same conflict, and a discrepancy as horrible and appalling, between the state of grace into which the individual is adopted, the hopes of which he is made heir, nay and the gifts of which he is put actually in possession, and that subtle and deep energy of his fallen nature, which still abides in him, and lives and struggles in a thousand forms and with desperate tenacity? But if he has notwithstanding good hope for himself in God's love, and in the sure mercies of His covenant, may he not have equal faith for the Church that she too may be as

* Matt. xx. 16.

a Church the adopted of God, and that in her He shall one day absolutely and finally triumph?

41. The Scriptures then, it is henceforth to be assumed, hold out to our view the actual, historical Church as the great object of the love and regard of Christ, as the medium whereby was conferred that title under which His favour is conveyed to His individual members: and as intended to have unity in the body and the spirit, with universality, authority, visibility, permanency, sympathy: as the casket and treasure-house of God's immortal gifts: as destined to a present warfare, and a final glorification. Why have we lapsed from this magnificent conception of a power incorporated upon earth, capable of resistance to all the enemies of Divine Truth with the certainty of ultimate victory, this conception which comprehends alike all space and all time, concentrating to tenfold efficacy the power of every noble motive, and realising and bringing home to our gross and feeble minds the sublime doctrine of supernatural grace? Why have we substituted for the idea, of which this is but a sketch, attesting by its very defects the losses we deplore, that misty, formless, lifeless, anomalous, negative, chaotic shape,

> If shape it might be called that shape had none
> Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb:

which is the only counterpart, in many minds, to the name of the scripture-honoured Church? How far must we have departed from that condition in which Saint Augustine could write, *credamus, fratres*,

*quantum quisque amat Ecclesiam Christi, tantum habet Spiritum Sanctum.**

42. It is not difficult to perceive a part at least of the cause to which we are to ascribe this evil. It has been the policy of the Romish church, and her practice, instead of leading her members more immediately near to their Head through the grand idea of incorporation, rather to interpose herself as an organ of communication distinct from them, and represented only in the persons of the hierarchy, between them and the Redeemer. She took into her own hands the powers that belong to Deity alone, and thus acquiring an absolute command over the souls of men, she confined their spiritual free agency within the narrowest possible limits that she might have the larger scope for her own discretionary power; and thus she reduced the greater portion of her children, more nearly than could have been anticipated, to the condition, so far as respected the religious action of the understanding, of machines. The Reformation generally took vengeance upon this excess by establishing its opposite. Not indeed in the deliberate intention of its great authors, but in its ulterior tendency, it went, instead of retaining the true conception of a visible and universal Church, and restoring and attaching it to the mass of Christians who had been deprived as it were of their part and lot in it, to erase that idea altogether and to substitute others much more narrow and partial. The idea of its first movers was, to restore

* Exp. in Ev. Joan. Tr. xxxii.

together, privilege and responsibility in the inquiry about truth: but the intoxication of suddenly and often violently recovered privilege greatly enfeebled the impression of responsibility which ought to have attended and chastened it. Free assent came to be considered not only as the condition of adequate religion in a rational being, but as the arbiter and criterion of truth: and thus the throne of authority being set up within each individual breast, we have deprived the Church of her prerogative, and therein ourselves of some of our substantial advantages.

43. But in honesty I must also allude to another reason why the doctrine of the Church has been nearly erased, with many of us, not indeed from our creed, but from our practical apprehensions of religion—it is, the spirituality of that doctrine. As our hearts are set upon the world, and upon the fulfilment of our natural wills, we are much indisposed to hear of the world to come, and of the fulfilment of the Divine will as our own appropriate business. In these terms, however, it may be said, is a mere statement of the general truth, that the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God—and it may be asked, what is its special operation in depressing the doctrine of the Church?

I answer, this. If I individualise my religion, if in modern language I place the account only between God and my conscience, free from all inspection and controul, I manifestly rid myself of a host of troublesome remembrancers, whose admonitions I cannot disprove and will not obey. I shall have thus succeeded

in removing, in rendering wholly nugatory, so far as I am concerned, all that might have had an entrance to my soul with authority, and might thus have wounded me and dispelled my spiritual torpor. There surely can be no doubt that a view of the Church not as a voluntary combination but as one preordered for us, and entailing obligations and even having parental claims upon us, should naturally tend to disturb the fatal ease of a deluded conscience fortified within its own fancied independence, and should bring near and obtrude upon us the idea that there is a God in the world whose will asserts audibly in the Church its title to be preferred to our own.

44. Let us exemplify familiarly. A man notorious for neglect of the poor, is exceedingly averse to becoming a member of a society, which has their benefit for its object. A man whose mind is disinclined to politics when proposed as an incidental topic of conversation, recoils with tenfold horror from an invitation to enrol his name in a political association. Why? because in each of these cases the association with others would be a force, a distinct additional force, propelling us towards an object which we had felt to be unattractive. It would add to the existing religious obligation to relieve the poor, a public pledge in acknowledgment of it: it would bring the opinions of our fellow men to bear strongly upon our conduct, it would rivet their eyes by the glaring contrast between profession and practice. It would practically invest them with an authority over us which they had not

before, calling them in as auxiliaries to the law of God, a visible power to aid the invisible, and calculated to operate with so much the greater force, as it was our own voluntary act which called it into being.

45. Shall we then wonder if the soul which dreads religion and would flee from it, which has not yet thoroughly suborned its natural witnesses within the breast but yet has imposed upon them a partial silence, and lulled them into a temporary slumber, if such a soul, feeling that its peace depends on the prolongation of that lethargy, should shun with watchfulness those sounds by which it might be dissipated? In that sad position, a position occupied, alas! by how many myriads, every moment of inaction is a step towards the consummation of the triumph of Satan. God has a claim to our whole existence. Every act which is performed in a state of mind not recognising that claim, is in truth an act of rebellion against the Almighty, and assuredly goes to form the habit of alienation within us: as every year during which an usurper continues to occupy his throne, diminishes the probability of the restoration of the legitimate possessor. Give therefore time to the Evil One, and you give him all he requires.

If then we get rid of the notion of a Church, and shut up the affair of our religion within our own bosoms—if the ministers of the Church dare not interfere—and if there be nothing in the decent usages of society to awaken unpleasant recollections—soon in the darkness and coldness of the silent breast does religion

surrender all its vital powers. So the great object of a man who knows he is living in sin usually is, not to profess irreligion, but simply to claim independence in respect of his religion. This is enough for this purpose. But the more he is compelled (whether by law or opinion) to associate with others, and to feel his association with others, in matters of religion, the more likely is he to be awakened to a sense of his danger : because then there is a power independent of himself and yet strongly operative upon him, which he can neither bribe nor stifle into silence.

Such a power exists in the full, public, general acknowledgment of the Church as a religious *society*, and in a faithful carrying out of that idea into the functions of our life.

46. Let us now consider both the duty and the advantages, of endeavouring, in all sobriety, to revive and realize that conception of the Church which pervades the works of the Apostles, and according to which we should contemplate her as our mother in the faith, from whom by Divine dispensation we received spiritual life, and from whose ordinances, together with the Word which she has preserved for us, and attested to us, we are still to gain our progressive growth in spiritual stature during the period of that childhood which we spend upon earth. Only be it observed that by her ordinances we do not mean only those which are public, but such also as, being private in their nature, belong to us as members in particular of the body ; each member having functions primarily referable to

itself, as well as others that more immediately regard the body at large.

47. Now, in the first place, we cannot doubt, that if the will of God do indeed enjoin us to think, feel and act, less as individuals and more as members of a body than we now do, there must be advantages attending the fulfilment of that will. The fact of its enunciation is enough to satisfy every Christian mind. Yet it is permitted to our infirmity to trace out into particulars, the wisdom of the Divine dispensations, that we may husband every resource against our manifold temptations, and may stand armed at all points. Only let us not imagine when we have specified this and that use of some one of the ordinances of God, that we have exhausted the subject, that we have stated the whole amount of its capacity to justify His command. On the contrary, it is a point of duty to remember that besides the results perceptible to us, there probably are far more and more weighty consequences which we do not apprehend; and the best method of summing up these is, always to fall back on the Divine command, as being the most cogent and legitimate of all motives to its own fulfilment, and as indicating an obligation which is paramount to any view of advantage or inconvenience.

48. And this appears to be the place for observing that the distinction between acting, feeling, thinking, as individuals, and discharging those functions as members of an organised and permanent and authori-

tative body, is neither visionary nor slight. Now looking steadily and singly at the point just proposed, any man who has been accustomed to act in combination with others, even under some merely conventional compact, will know that such a position involves conditions most materially different from those which attach to a man acting on his own account. While enumerating them in particular, we shall also be enabled to bring out the beneficial results annexed to those differences.

49. First in order and in magnitude of them all is this: that adoption into a body tends to depress and absorb the idea of self. Now whatever may or has been said, and by persons of great authority, respecting self-love as a part of our constitution, may it not well be questioned whether self was ever intended to form an object of separate contemplation on any distinct principle of preference; whether in short the whole amount of our dealings with self, though they may constitute the greater part of our mental life, be not subject to exactly the same laws as the ordinarily less amount of our dealings with others; whether a preference to self as such be ever justified in a Christian view: and further, whether at all events, and on the shewing even of those who would here support an opposite doctrine, the idea of self as an authority, and of the mere dictate of self as a motive, whether to belief or to practice, and whether in things human or in things divine, be not by a great deal too prominent in almost every mind? Then coalescence

with our brethren is advantageous. For united action will be incompatible with an arbitrary or capricious independence of judgment: it will discourage self-reliance in the adoption of conclusions: it will bring before us in the processes of reflection the sentiments of others, their claims to respect, their comparative probabilities of correctness. Men have felt these truths: and have responded to them by every kind of combination in religion: and the many combinations which we perceive in sects around us, are simply so many imperfect aftergrowths, intended to supply the place of the primitive and legitimate idea of the Church. But when we have adopted that idea of divine original, we shall find that every other need of combination will range under it, and harmonise with it:

> "Me this unchastened freedom tires:
> I feel the weight of chance desires:*

for the principle of selfishness is, after all, weariness to the soul: its repression will give us more ease with more liberty, and more energy: and it will be most effectually repressed when we come to feel our real dependence on one another as members, and on the Saviour as head, in that Church, which we are so expressly told is His body.

50. In truth, a sound view of the Church seems to detach us altogether from the idea of self as such. It represents to us an extrinsic body of Divine truth: calls us to try and prove it: and having proved it to

* Wordsworth, Ode to Duty.

hold it fast—but why? not because we have proved it, but because it is true and therefore also good. Because we have proved it, we know it to be good: but this our knowledge is merely a condition and a medium, it is not properly the cause of our attachment to it. We are not therefore to dwell upon the mental processes which composed the proof, upon the argumentative part of religion: but upon the things proved: and to carry away the eye from self to the Redeemer, accepting all as His gift; desiring to concentrate the whole soul in the contemplation of Him, and in an offering to Him; and not feeling that we in our feebleness have any powers to spare for a distinct self-regard. Then we, as it were, receive back from Him the soul which we have offered to Him, to be instrumentally the appointed object of our care and culture; but He remains the source and the end even of all that labour which we bestow upon our own selves, as the portion of the vineyard primarily allotted to our charge.

51. Now if our belonging to a Church merely meant, as in the popular modern signification, that each of us has attached himself by choice to one or another of the prevalent denominations of Christians, there is nothing in such a conception to indicate that we are no longer the self-centered and self-actuated beings, which we are by natural inclination. But if the Church be as an institution independent of and superior to our will, and if it claim our adhesion with a moral authority, then our connexion with it is of

a different description: then we surrender our individuality into her general life, we give ourselves as members to a body; and our particular powers and functions become subordinate to the general purposes of the body, and our will, in order to attain a right state, falls in and concurs with the will which governs all its parts by a common and pervading actuation. There is then in the catholic idea of the Church, provision made for superseding the idea of self as a centre of motion, and the idea of self-interest as an end, by giving to us our Christian privileges, not in our capacity of individuals but as component portions of that great frame of which the glorified Redeemer is the living and sympathising Head.

52. Let us compare the effect of the other theory upon the prominence of the idea of self in our personal religion. There the Church is not considered as intervening in any way between the Saviour and the individual, but rather it is regarded as an institution of convention resting upon grounds of religious expediency; and her laws as dependent on the will of individuals, whether few or many. The scheme of salvation is addressed by God not through one channel to a vast visible body, but to a selected number of particular persons. This salvation is conveyed direct by an operation exclusively internal; and it is recognised and known by an evidence which does not appeal to any outward signs, cognisable by others, as guarantees of the Divine love. Thus each man becomes to himself the arbiter of revealed truth, and

the sole witness of effectual grace; and the love shown to him does not, according to his conceptions, belong alike to all those around him; some among them may, he hopes, be taken in like manner, but there is no palpable and general warrant under which he may pour out upon them his own sanctified affections under that dearest of all relationships, which is constituted by a common redemption from a common ruin. He sees then God: he sees himself: he sees other individuals: in Christian humility he may lean on some of them: may lean on them too much, to their injury and his own; but the Church supplies a safer and more probable guide to his judgment: a witness of his Father's love both preceding and independent of, and additional to, that derived from his personal experience, and a broad channel to his affections, showing him a whole visible community as the proper claimants, not merely of his human but of his Christian sympathies; but especially, in each of these particulars, supplying other objects of contemplation and of subordinate reliance besides the single one of self, and releasing and diffusing the pent up energies of his love alike for the benefit of others and his own.

53. So much for the depression of our pride. But the enlargement of our love, thus intimately connected with it, is deserving of notice as a distinct benefit attaching to the true notion of the Church. In the early ages, when that notion was most vigorous, love was most abundant among the disciples. Love decayed in the subsequent perversions: in the first perversion of exaggeration, and in the second perversion

of attenuation. Surely love is stronger where union is closer, and union is closer where natural relations, having some seal and sanction over and above that of private choice, combine with private choice, than where the latter is alone its tie: as for example, usually in marriage than in friendship. And analogous to this is the relative position of these two views of the Church. From this junction, in a natural and not merely a conventional body, arises the multiplication of joys and sufferings, and the benefit which under the Christian covenant accrues in common from both; but a multiplication of the former is in a greater ratio than the latter, because virtuous and sympathetic suffering always brings with it an infusion of compensating joy. The exercises of love are enlarged, and thus its energies increased by being called into action on an increased number of occasions; and hereby the education of the soul for heaven receives a fuller accomplishment. We know how much in all common matters individual strength is increased by combination: how much the whole exceeds the mere aggregate of the parts: it is so in the Church under the Catholic creed respecting her, but in the vague notion of recent days, the very best we can hope for is a mere union by juxta-position, but not the intertwining, the knitting and tempering together, of bone, muscle, nerve, and flesh, which intimacy, nay intricacy of connexion, is the strength alike of the material and of the spiritual body.

54. Again we know that sympathy is a principle which for the most part gives increased energy to

action. When the electric chain pervades the hearts of many, it seems to render all their combined force available for each individual, as the momentum of a material body composed of many parts would carry every one of them with much greater rapidity and power than they would have possessed if they had been put in motion apart from one another. And thus we may see how eloquence works its effect on crowds much more powerfully than on individuals; and how the most indifferent wit is sufficient to convulse a popular assembly with laughter, which if obtruded on any one of its component members in private, would either pass unnoticed or excite contempt. In this strength of sympathy is a part of the *rationale*, so to speak, of public prayer; it husbands and multiplies individual energies; and the higher our conception of the Church, the better we shall be prepared to estimate and to profit by this great function.

55. We are next to observe that a strong, habitual, practical conception of the Church and of our own personal adoption into it, is eminently calculated to give energy and warmth to those public devotions which are always so dearly prized by persons of wisdom and piety. On any theory, indeed, public prayer, the union of many souls in a common petition to the throne of grace, presents a noble idea, embracing alike the needs and the capacities, and worthy of the high destiny of man. But how much more does this idea acquire both of solemnity and of concentration, when

we not only believe, but live and act and meet in worship under the belief that the very spouse of Christ is then discharging her high function of immediate address to Him in her character as such. Thus the worship of the Church will be to men not the mere accumulation of the prayers of so many individuals; but each will be acting in confession, thanksgiving, and prayer, for all the rest as well as for himself, and will be thus uplifted into a higher and larger sphere of duty by a warrant expressly divine; and from this increased dignity and magnitude of function will result an enlargement and fervency of heart which will give new wings to our prayers, as they mount, through buoyant air, the serene firmament of heaven.

56. True the individual in his closet addresses the Saviour; and precious is the privilege of his perpetual access to his Lord: but more elevated still is the public worship, because as an individual he stands in a lower position than that which belongs to him in the Church as a part of her incorporate life: he is not as an individual so assured of his being wedded to Christ, as is the Church of her mystical and indissoluble relations with Him: and she acts upon this, not supposition merely, but moral certainty of His favour, and of vital union with Him and the continual derivation of vital graces from Him, with a degree of confidence which for the body is safe, but for the individual would be intoxicating. Her privilege is so high, that the sense of it would probably destroy in most even of pious men the just equilibrium of the mind, were it

contemplated with the same certainty as a personal possession: but being contemplated as a common good, and as realised to the individual not as such, but in virtue of his enrolment in a body, the force of self-love is broken and dissipated; for we are not so apt to be proud for our brethren as for ourselves. A man is not proud of the light of the sun: but would he not be so, if it were not common to his brethren with himself? Pride, in one form or another, ever dogs and haunts us; and, to use another simple illustration, as national pride is better, or in any case less bad, than personal pride, so the sentiment of the Catholic is better, and its besetting danger less, than those of the individualist in religion, to whom the Church is but an exterior framework, and in no higher sense attached to the essential relations between God and his soul.

57. We would earnestly and seriously entreat men to consider, whether there be not something in the conception of the Church as an indefeasibly though partially blessed and sanctified body: and as a legitimately authoritative, though not an infallible, body: which is eminently fitted to assist the earnest Christian in attaining these two great objects:—firstly, as has already been argued, in the maintenance of a very high view of the doctrines of grace and of the Christian privilege of communion with God through and in his Son, and of personal union with that Son as the very life and substance of Christianity, with less of the commonly attendant danger of presumptuous

inflation and spiritual pride: secondly, in the execution of the details of a stricter holiness in habitual practice.

58. To exemplify the latter, let us suppose a person assailed for peculiarity, for righteousness overmuch, and for an implied affectation of superiority over others, because he encourages frequency of worship in the Church, and believes it a duty to participate in the outward acts of that worship according to her directions when they are authentically conveyed; or let it be, because he argues for the propriety of carrying into effect (after our Saviour's example) our Saviour's command to use the practice of fasting, as a part of our religious discipline. Now, supposing he did these things from a spontaneous and original (as he does them from a free) conviction of their propriety, he would be open to a plausible imputation under the heads just mentioned. Doubtless he would be doing them in single-minded obedience to what he believed to be the divine will: but let us consider his case while defending himself against his impugners. Is it not quite obvious that he is greatly aided in repelling the charge of assumption, by being enabled to point to the precepts and practice of the Church, as a body endowed with authority to assist the faithful? He may say, this is no invention of mine; it is proposed to me; I approve it, it is true; but I did not discover it; I adopted it from a legitimate and sufficient authority; I am not now setting up my judgment over yours, but were I to desist from this or that practice, to abandon this or that conviction, I should then, in-

deed, be setting up my judgment unsupported by reason against that of the Church. He would thus show that he was endeavouring to bring his practice to the very point at which alone it might rightfully be expected to coincide with that of Christians in general, the very line of conduct which in the nature of things must be least liable to be marked with a spirit of egoism. So true, then, is it, that the Church, when viewed in that parental character which is so broadly separated from the nature of despotism, is not viewed as having dominion over our consciences, but as a helper of our faith.

59. Yes, strictly and eminently a helper of our faith; for she affords to religious practice an extrinsic support, by an appeal to an acknowledged standard; available very frequently in cases when other tribunals would not be recognised. Let us consider the practical effect in a case of weak and infant faith exposed to ridicule from some person careless of religion, though possibly not a hardened scoffer; one exemplifying the very character, perhaps, whose opposition in the way of ridicule is likely to be formidable, because blasphemy would generally cause so strong a revulsion as to defeat its own object. How advantageous for the young follower of God, instead of appealing alone to his inward sentiments and convictions, which his assailant would in no sense comprehend, much less regard, to be able also to point to an authority*

* Are there not many young men who have felt how great a religious advantage they possess in our universities, particularly that of Oxford, through the strict injunction of religious study, which is

acknowledged by the mass of men as entitled to a general respect, and so to place a great strength of human opinion on his side, thus forming a shelter for his own spiritual convictions, within which though human yet divinely provided shelter, they may grow into maturity and hardihood. St. Paul did not disdain thus to attempt enlisting human sentiment in his favour when he announced to an assembly of persons chiefly holding Pharisaic opinions, that of the resurrection of the dead he was called in question. This is the true wisdom of the serpent, and perfectly compatible with the innocence of the dove.

60. And again, as regards the accuser himself, how much is the hope hereby increased of an impression upon him! From the principles confessed, he cannot suspect formality: by the appeal to an extrinsic and public authority, he is deprived of every shadow of a plea to impute fanaticism or any form of egoism. He is not always nor ordinarily destitute of all candour: and in any stage but the very extreme one of unfairness, surely such a case is likely to impress him. And now let us suppose the accused retaliating, or at least becoming the assailant, though not retaliating, because he returns good for evil. He is able to say, "this very authority under which I act is one which

required of every undergraduate, in order to enable him to pass through the schools and obtain an academical degree? They are thus enabled to give scope to what they love, without fear of the reproach of singularity: a reproach always painful to delicate and sensitive minds. True, with a high and confirmed Christian principle they would bear it; but the question is about persons not yet having attained such maturity of principle as to be indifferent to taunts, and how they may be best helped along the early stages of the road towards Heaven.

you acknowledge, and which, believe me, is binding upon you; you have no conscientious scruple against it; you cannot, then, evade its force; and you, not I, are the opponent of the most legitimately constituted and established opinion. You have the high privileges of the Church; you are a member of the body of Christ: see that His grace be not to either of us a savour of death unto death: and yet it must be so if it be not a savour of life unto life: if we live not that life, whose obligations and conditions, whether we will it or no, are already entailed and bound upon us."

61. Consider how much is acquired of additional force, upon such a ground, for operating upon the character of the baptized but still careless Christian. The popular teaching of the day tells him that he is in a state of condemnation; and this is true, but not the whole truth: in fact, his condemnation is double: it is not the simple condemnation of the fallen child of Adam, but a compound twofold condemnation; made up, first of the sentence upon that state; secondly, of the aggravated wrath due to a neglect and abdication, more or less deliberate, of the grace of Christianity: it is not that the man has refused to enter the covenant, but that, being already within its terms and obligations, he has habitually broken them: and whatever, therefore, the force of the motives which, without such a view of the Church, can be brought from the armoury of the terrors of the Lord to act upon a man, thus greatly are these motives enhanced when that view is added.

62. And here we may observe upon a difficulty which may arise in the daily intercourse of life, namely, with reference to the manner in which it is right to meet censures often pronounced upon persons for assuming and professing peculiar opinions in religion. Nothing can be more alien to the idea and to the spirit of the Church of Christ, than any introduction of such opinions as are novel and peculiar with reference to her scheme of Divine truth. In this sense therefore, to say a man holds peculiar views is indeed to pronounce a sentence of the heaviest reprobation. But on the other hand it may happen, that the mass of the members of the Church at a particular time or place, may themselves have sunk into a lethargic state, and may have seriously lowered their own sentiments, in proportion to the lapse of their practice from the elevation of the Christian standard. Now in such a case the peculiarity apparently chargeable on him who in a degenerate community first attains to a sense of this degeneracy, and recurs to the use of a juster measure of Christian doctrine, is really chargeable only on that community which has fallen away from the principles maintained in the universal and perpetual creed of the Church, the body of Christ.

63. At the same time it is fair to observe that in that progressive extension of vital and inward religion, with which God appears of late years to have blessed this branch of His Church, there has not been, as neither was it to be expected that there should be, a preservation of the perfect harmony and equilibrium

of Christian truth. It was natural that the first impressions of ardent minds should have reference to the perils overhanging individual souls, and thence to the truths which are most palpably connected with individual deliverance, rather than with the general edification of the body of the Church in grace and glory; and hence men in adopting what to them has been a new view of Christian truth, may not always have been sufficiently mindful of the fact, or careful to maintain it before others who rebuke them for peculiarity, that their belief of Christianity, so far as it is true, is not new but old; that they are not wilfully, and ought not to be, carvers out of novel devices, but that they simply revert and recur to the faith which is professed by the visible and permanent institution of the Church, under that very clear and pure manifestation of it which the Church of England seems to afford.

64. But there has been something of a just retribution as well as of divine teaching—something of a just and tender admonition—in the hardship and misconstruction that persons of this class may have suffered. They have adopted their religion individually, and as it were under a peculiar title, not given to the body at large; they have forgotten that it is simply as members of that body that they have or can have any rights at all; they have appealed to some novel name as of a class or party under which they have allowed themselves to rank, sometimes, perhaps, provoked and challenged to adopt it; but also sometimes readily, or even with eagerness owning the distinctive appella-

tion, instead of disdaining any other foundation, either nominal or substantial, than that which was laid in the Apostolic Church. In this way they may either have appeared to become fanatical, or may, by being too little careful to protest against the imputation of novelty, have surrendered to persons of minds substantially less sound than their own, the vantage ground of the Church and of general consent; they may have substituted, insensibly perhaps, a narrower sentiment for that of devotion to the Church; and may have been compelled to lean apparently either with presumption on their own private judgment, or with some imprudence at least, upon the opinions of teachers few in number, recently arisen, shallow in qualification, and like themselves failing to claim relationship with the cloud of witnesses, who attest his faith to the well-informed and established Christian.

65. May they learn from the harsh treatment with which they may have met, to inquire whether there has not been something of error in their conduct, which they are in this manner mercifully reminded to correct. Renouncing all self-reliance, acknowledging no standard of faith in the first and highest sense except the revealed word of God, recognising as the most natural and most probable witness of the sense of that word, the uncorrupted and undivided Church, in proportion as genuine historical inquiry can find that it satisfied in substance these two conditions; and using, therefore, its aid, not as a fetter but as a prop to human

judgment, partly on account of its authority, but primarily on account of its veracity in handing down the early views and practices of Christianity; they will act upon the principles not less of common sense than of spiritual religion, and they will disarm, not indeed the obstinate and carnal persecutor of Divine truth, but all the weaker yet frequently well-intentioned brethren, whose fears they, perhaps in part by imprudence, have alarmed, but whose confidence they are bound to seek, under the law of Christian charity.

66. The past remarks leave two purposes yet remaining to be specified. The permanent and unbroken existence of the Church as a visible institution through so many ages, its having survived the wreck of that vast empire on which it was first engrafted, and again its having outlived the vitality of most of those modern monarchies which arose out of the seminal period of the middle ages, retaining all its essential conditions as they were in the very first era of its existence, is not only an elevating idea to the Christian, but it is in itself a standing witness to the truth of his religion, and a powerful corroboration of his faith, operating in a similar manner to its awful counterpart, the equally permanent, unbroken and palpable existence of the Jewish nation, in a state of exile from the covenant of grace. Among known human institutions there is no parallel to this. The Church has not only thus existed, but has thus existed in immediate juxtaposition with the most energetic mental developments, which the history of the human

race during its term has exhibited. If the launch of Mahometanism was more violent, and its early conquests more sudden and extensive, yet not only the amount of influence it now exercises in a strictly religious sense, but the amount both of secular and of social and moral power now exercised by its professors, is immeasurably inferior to that which has been fostered under the shade of Christianity.

67. It must be observed that the whole efficacy of this attestation rests upon the notion of the Church as a visible institution. For upon the theory of an invisible Church, there is no provision for the transmission of the testimony from man to man. It matters not how often it be revived in individual minds; they may enjoy the witness of its suitableness to their own desires, but they cannot establish its identity with the primitive faith, or the integrity of the documents in which it professes to be contained. To establish that identity, you must have continuity in the chain of witnesses through all generations; and the only continuity that can be available for the purpose, appears to be that of public and official succession. For it is not only needful in order to make out our case, that the organ which now witnesses to the genuineness of Scripture, should have been informed of that genuineness traditionally by an uninterrupted series of persons; but also that all those who compose the series, should, in each of the intervening generations, have borne the same witness. The fact that this witness has been continually borne, and continu-

ally subject to scrutiny and trial, is what assures us against delusion. And not continually alone, but it was needful also that it should be formally borne, by parties avowedly and ostensibly receiving and transmitting it. Now does not this necessarily suppose visibility in the Church, which, as it will hereafter be argued, implies public succession in its governing body?

68. And not only is it an office of the Church to attest the genuineness of the sacred writings, but likewise it is peculiarly hers to maintain a pure and sound interpretation of them, by directing the minds of her members, and especially of her ministers, to the pursuit of that kind of learning which connects itself with both the transmission and the exposition of the faith. First, as regards its transmission. The teaching of religion is to extend over all lands, over all languages, over all generations. Now immediately that we consider Christianity as overstepping all the barriers of language, and as comprehending a vast range of place and time, we essentially involve, not the expediency alone, but the necessity of the aids of learning. For it is documentary correspondence in the main that connects distant places. Still more it is documentary evidence that connects distant ages by a light pervading their whole tract, and ascertaining to each one the facts and histories of every other. It is true that oral tradition somewhat assists the attainment of the same purpose; but it is only while it is subject to perpetual correction and verification from that which

is documentary. Lastly, as respects different languages, it would be a contradiction in terms, or nearly so, to deny that learning must be the instrument, in the absence of miracle, of securing substantial identity in the representations of the Divine Word, which are produced through these different *media*.

69. And now as respects the exposition of the faith. Let us consider the necessity which exists for a responsible body, specially charged with the office of defending the Gospel against heretical invasion and perversion. It may naturally be asked, why all this solicitude? If you attest the transmitted Word, is it not enough? Does not the essential purity of that Word stand admitted, and must it not be ever and infinitely more pure than any system of interpretation? Undoubtedly it must; and had it pleased God that the work of the Gospel should be carried on by His Word alone, and not also by the agency of human interpretations of His Word, this answer would have been more satisfactory, though the function of the Church might still have remained as a witness to other facts besides that of the genuineness and authenticity of the sacred writings. But He has established in the Church an office of interpretation. Not that there has been infallibility, or impeccability, in its discharge. But there can be no doubt of its existence, nor any question that it attaches peculiarly to the accredited ministry of the Church. We cannot therefore abolish the function; and the question arises, whether deep study be not necessary in order to fulfil

its obligations? But, it may be asked, is the function legitimate and useful? Let us now consider, both of the necessity of such a function, and whether, upon the whole, immense benefit has not arisen from its exercise.

70. Mankind have by nature a sense of the power of God combined with an alienation of the will from Him. Had they the first alone, they would of course receive his word as He gave it; had they the second alone, they would of course and avowedly reject it. But under the existing combination of these reciprocally counter-working sentiments, they are for the most part disinclined either heartily to accept or boldly to renounce it; and they are apt accordingly to receive it in form for the satisfaction of their fears, but to evade and neutralise it in substance to avoid the sacrifice of their individual wills. Now this evasion and neutralisation can best be effected by the method of misinterpreting the sacred text and thereby misrepresenting its commands, and thus getting rid of whatever in them is mortifying to human pride and desire, or inventing compensations which revelation has not really allowed. Here therefore we have in our view a cause not only of the most malignant but of the most unceasing operation. As permanent as is the force of human inclination, is also the bias towards heresy, towards the putting glosses upon the word of God, and reducing it to the measure of our own discretion. It seems to follow, that an equally permanent corrective is required to uphold everywhere the faith

in its integrity and unity against the multiplying and fluctuating forms of error.

71. Here therefore is the necessity, which it was proposed to investigate, of an organised and perpetual body, charged in the face of all men with the maintenance of the truth. But that body fulfils its functions by a human instrumentality. It follows that it partakes of the very evils against which it is appointed to contend; it follows that the attainment of its purpose, that the provision for meeting that necessity, are only partial—so is every operation of nature, so is the earthly consummation of every one of God's merciful dispensations. Yet there is a provision. Look back to the history of the Romish Church in the middle ages: it preserved throughout both the written word and the fundamental doctrines and symbols of Christianity. The same is true of the Greek and of other branches of the Church, although themselves, perhaps, in particular points defective or corrupt. There was no body, in the nature of a sect, of which we are enabled to say the same. The Vaudois, if aboriginal, were not in the nature of a sect; if seceders, then they derived the doctrines of the creeds from the Church of the west or of the east. I omit to mention the period of the Church's glory, when, with undivided voice and heart, she condemned the heresies of earlier ages. Even in later times, but then much more easily and palpably, was she a repressor of heresy in matters fundamental, however infected in her own body with error short of fundamental, according

to the promise of the Redeemer, which guarantees the preservation, but not the perfection, of the Church. Here, then, is the benefit which it remained to show, the constant preservation of fundamental truth within the precinct of the visible Church at large.

72. It is now time to pass onwards to another portion of this inquiry—to the endeavour, namely, to meet such objections to the foregoing principle as may probably be anticipated. First, let us obviate a misconception that is most likely to arise. There is no claim here made or implied for any particular local portion of the Church as such, to possess the high distinction of being invested in all minds with those plenary ideas of privilege and authority which belong in full only to the Church universal; the full measure of regard and deference to her as a parent and guide, as qualified to be regarded like parents with affection, like guides with confidence, is only due to the body which fulfils the idea of the Catholic Church of Christ. We need not now inquire what are the essential conditions of membership in that Church, or what is necessary to constitute her unity—these are properly subsequent considerations. It may be that she has lost that virgin beauty and harmony of her form which adorned her youth, and that, so far, the affections she once riveted upon herself are now baffled and without a home; but we must not allow ourselves to be hindered in receiving the truth of Scripture by the anticipation of posterior difficulties, which, if they have arisen at all, will have arisen only out of our own misdeeds: the

object here urged is, to aim at grasping and embodying in the first instance by effort, (under Divine grace,) and then confirming by mental habit, an effectual conception of the Church as a body within which we are comprehended, as that to which we belong rather than that she belongs to us; as a living admitted proof of the love of Christ to us, and as having the stewardship of his word and the ordinances of his grace. And by an effectual conception is here meant that which is not only allowed by the understanding and then dismissed and laid aside, but that which vitally pervades the whole mind and heart, which imbues the affections, which is ever at hand to mould even the first forms of thought as it is born, and to impress its character upon it more and more, as it assumes a more definite shape, and finds vent outwardly in word or act.

73. This we may claim for the Church of Christ. She is however represented to us partly in what belongs to her universal and permanent character, partly in subsidiary rules and in executive powers, which must needs be locally distributed for the purposes of order and of discipline: the local power cannot claim the general authority in general matters, but in local matters, and with reference to local peculiarities; this power, too, is entitled to be heard upon the same principle, just as the sovereignty of this great empire, for example, is represented in her colonial dependencies by a delegated power, to which obedience is paid in more limited subject matter, but upon the same principle and under the same obligation, as to the

central and original authority. Yet the local Church, in matters of a permanent nature, is bound to have regard to the sense of the general one; a principle, which was eminently exemplified by the Church of England even during the fiery period of the Reformation.

74. It is next intended to enumerate, and afterwards to meet, the five following forms of objection. Firstly, that such an idea of the Church, as a real objective *ens* in the scheme of religion, as a portion of Divine revelation, tends to abate the reflective sedulity of individual piety; and this, when discussed, will give occasion to show how anomalous it would be that a real sacrifice of spiritual advantages by the individual should be the result of these professedly more elevating forms of general principles. Secondly, that the Church, when placed so prominently in our view, obstructs our contemplation of the Redeemer, and our access to Him. Thirdly, that it also tends to destroy the singleness of our trust in Him, and to introduce unawares that most offensive and most injurious doctrine of human merit. Fourthly, that whereas the wicked in the Church have no title to final salvation, it is a mere fiction to include them in our view of the body of Christ. Fifthly, that it nullifies the liberty of private judgment.

75. With regard to the first, if it be true that God has not chosen to establish his relations with each of us on a distinct and individual footing, but has constituted us in a body to derive from its source of life a portion of its general life, we need not fear that an

ample discharge of one branch of duty should encroach upon another. Each of our natural members has offices to perform for itself, has contrivances for feeding itself, besides being evidently fitted and intended to discharge certain functions on behalf of the body. Now, its exercise in those functions, within the limits of nature, does not hinder but promotes its own particular health and growth. The leg, for example, of a man who walks much, the arm of one who labours with the spade, draw an increase of strength to themselves from performing offices not undertaken on their own account, but wherein they serve as the instruments of the entire body, while it is a central principle that carries into outward and physical effect the resolutions of the mind. And surely so it is with our spiritual position in the body of the Lord Jesus Christ. Surely here, as in the natural form, the operations of a man are intended to be performed, not in the contemplation of his own narrow self as an end, but of an end which is extrinsic to him and of far larger scope. Just so we see that every act of benevolence loses the flower of its purity when reflection on any benefit that may result to the agent is intermixed with its composition and execution—

> "It is the battle, not the prize,
> That fills the hero's breast with joy."

It is the mercy, not the ensuing and rewarding peace, which animates the heart of the merciful. And yet the benefit, though uncontemplated, will come if the

act be done aright—it is not sacrificed by being put out of view.

76. Nor let any one suppose it to be here recommended or implied that a man should be neglectful, in the smallest degree, of that most weighty and most multifarious care which is due to his own self, as his first, nearest, and most usual province of duty. His own self affords a distinct province of duty, and that province, measured by quantity of action, is the largest of all; but it does not furnish a distinct law or principle of duty; in truth it is not a visionary notion, it is a sober and solid Christian truth, that every high-minded man will carry on the work of self-discipline itself, not so much with his own individual benefit and happiness habitually before his eyes as with the glory of God, filling, and delighting, and enlarging his vision, and enabling him to discharge that work more joyfully and more effectually than if his thoughts and hopes ran only the narrow round of his own insulated being. Besides, there is generally implanted in our natural constitution an ample security for at least a sufficient amount of desire and inclination towards our own particular benefit; so that for one error of defect there will always be a thousand of excess in this direction. Sound ethics would surely require of us not to look only at the one, but also to make some provision against the thousand cases. There is no fear of any extensive deficiency in the regard of the individual to his own welfare, so far as quantity is concerned; the great difficulty is to induce us to

adopt the true way of attaining it, namely, by looking at that higher end which we are bidden and bounden to contemplate, and leaving the result in God's hand. All the reflex action and care of the conscientious mind upon itself will in this way be preserved; but it will be kept more free from the taint of selfishness, while it will also securely realise the objects at which that hateful spirit grasps in vain.

77. The second objection, again, if it could be proved to have a foundation in fact, would be absolutely fatal, for God's ordinances are not suicidal and self-contradictory. But is it not more probable, that a true and high doctrine concerning the Church would have the very opposite effect; that it would bring men more palpably near to Christ, and greatly promote their sacred and vital union with Him. Let it not be supposed that reliance is to be placed on this or any mere doctrine, or on anything else but the effectual actuating grace of God as the true means of making a man religious; but it is well to point out that what the Catholic faith teaches to be the appointed, are also, in the view of our understanding, the appropriate channels of grace. Now the Catholic doctrine of the Church is intended to bring home to the mind the joint ideas, that we are members of a body, that that body is the body of Christ, and that the body of Christ is also the spouse of Christ, under the law that two shall be one flesh. The doctrine that represents the Church as the ground of our Christian privileges, so represents it because this in fact is the most accurate, the most

comprehensive, the most profound and inward manner of exhibiting our close and vital relation to the Redeemer as very organs of that body in which He fulfils, from day to day, His work of redemption upon earth. The effect of these ideas is, to compose a chain consisting of links alike few and firm which attach the soul of the believer in the most indissoluble manner to his Saviour. True the individual mind may at times have a sense of that holy union more directly sympathetic, or rather more personally available (but therefore more limited) than that of connexion with Him in a body; a sense of personal reliance stronger than the sense of corporate union. But this need in no way be precluded; be it so: the doctrine of the Church will place him on a higher level, and supply firmer supports, from which he may thus spring upwards, to avail himself of all his individual gifts for Divine contemplation. But on the other hand the individual mind will flag, from time to time, or entirely; sin will arise like a cloud between the Redeemer and the offending soul; then it is that the idea of the Church, and the fact of incorporation into Him through the Church, will remain a token of Divine love, and a solace to the penitent, a sign for good in the midst of darkness otherwise impenetrable; and in all the habitual moods of his life and his daily occupations, it will supply a consciousness of spiritual blessing, not exclusive, nor offensive, nor irreverent, but yet proximate, familiar, and ready for all the acts and occasions of life.

78. I take next the objection concerning the doc-

trine of human merit.* There seems to be an obvious and popular answer to this particular charge, in the remark, that a latent idea of merit, whether acknowledged by the individual to himself, or not, is far more likely to grow up, where he rests upon an individual title to his salvation, than where he conceives himself an heir of grace and an object of Divine love, in common with masses of men and whole communities around him. But let us analyse a little more particularly. There is a notion, that the Church enjoins many positive practices in religion; and that the performance of these practices would induce self-righteousness. Now, the objection pre-supposes that the practices are good in themselves; we must therefore assume this to be the fact. For if they were bad, then of course the right line of conduct would be to seek

* An important distinction is to be taken between the first use of the term merit, and that antichristian sense of inherent and intrinsic desert which it has been in more recent ages used to convey. It appears that in the writings of the early fathers, when the word *mereri* was introduced, it meant no more than to earn, or simply to attain, or work out, the ἀρνύναι of Homer in the Odyssey (νόστον ἀρνύμενος, Od. i. 5). Thus it by no means went beyond the doctrine of Scripture, which speaks of the sanctified man as ἄξιος. It is easy to cite passages from Saint Augustine, for example, in support of this remark. Exp. in Ev. Joan. xxiv. meruerunt priora tempora prophetas afflatos, et impletos verbo Dei: meruimus nos prophetam ipsum verbum Dei. There is no shadow of a reason for supposing that St. Augustine meant to urge any real desert in its least substantial form in this passage, but it appears he simply intended to convey what different periods had derived or received from God. Clearly he does not imply any relation of the gift to merit; on the contrary, the age to which Christ came was that which was to fill up and heap to overflowing the measure of the iniquities of their fathers by the sacrifice of that Just One; and this was the age to which not only inspired teaching but the Messiah himself was given..

for their abrogation or reform. What then is the real scope of this objection? It is the general truth, that even in carrying out the principle of holiness into the details of charity or self-discipline, we are continually beset by the danger of imbibing some tinge of belief that our acts are meritorious; of mistaking what is done in us, for what is done by us; and of imagining that anything done either in us or by us, could establish a claim of desert properly so called.

79. But are we on account of this danger to suffer the principle to lie barren? Are we to refrain from acts of benevolence, because we may inflate ourselves upon them with our insane pride? Why then should we not refrain from acts of self-government, self-restraint, self-discipline, because we may be guilty of the same wickedness to which in every act of duty, be it what it may, we are perpetually liable? From which we can only be preserved in discharging any of them, by the power of Divine grace: but that power is alike sufficient to preserve us in them all; and in fact we may fear that the carnal mind sometimes shelters itself under this plausible objection, in order to avoid the sacrifice of its appetites, because whenever the argument is tested by application to one of the other departments of Christian obligation, we at once see that, while most useful as a warning, it is utterly futile in argument and mischievous in practice, if it be opposed to acts good in themselves and in their circumstances. Upon the whole, then, the objection is valid, if taken in the nature of a general caution, applicable to the

whole range of Christian practice; but it has no force as against the doctrine of the Church.

80. The fourth objection upon the list does not seem to present any real difficulty. We cannot dive into the mystery which represents to us wicked men as the real though wasteful recipients of spiritual blessings; but we see this profound truth supported on every side by the analogy of nature in a thousand forms, under which such men have the undoubted enjoyment of real temporal blessings, of the sun and the rain and all physical arrangements, as well as many that are social and domestic, intellectual, and even in a limited sense, moral. "Many are called, but few are chosen:" great is the mystery involved in these words, and we are not only not bidden, but forbidden to pierce into its depths. We stand upon the simple fact, that throughout the Scriptures of the New Testament not only those who shall constitute the final Church, but the whole community of the baptized, are in a long course both of parables and facts, represented as objects of the redeeming love of God. They are all made branches of the vine, though some be unfruitful. The seed is sown in all, though in many it never reach perfection. But the ingrafting and the sowing are given to prove, and amply prove, the love of God towards these perishing souls. The whole course of apostolic teaching coincides with the sense of the metaphors just cited. Rebuking every form of sin as it appears; predicting its final destruction; the first governors of the Church everywhere address the

mass within its pale as the subjects of sanctifying grace: it follows, that their successors must do the same. And if we want more argument than is afforded by scriptural precept and inspired practice, we must surely find it in the affecting reason assigned by our Lord—his command not to attempt rooting up the tares at this time, "lest ye root up the wheat also:" lest in the blindness and rashness of human nature you cast out into the region of despair those whom a Saviour's love has placed in the region of blessing, and who will in time bear fruit, who are perhaps even now secretly bearing fruit, beneath His tender culture.

81. And lastly, persons are in great alarm for their liberty of private judgment. The true doctrine of private judgment is, as has been shown by many writers, most important and most sacred: it has the direct sanction of Scripture. It teaches the duty, and as correlative to the duty, the right of a man to assent freely and rationally to the truth. It is commonly called a right to inquire; but it is to inquire for the purpose of assenting: for he has no right (that is, none as before God) to reject the truth after his inquiry. It is a right to assent to truth, to inquire into alleged truth. Now all that the true idea of the Church proposes to him is a probable and authorised guide. This is wholly distinct from the Romish infallibility. The Church of England holds individual freedom in things spiritual to be an essential attribute of man's true nature, and an essential condition of the right reception of the Gospel; and testifies to that sentiment in the

most emphatic mode, by encouraging the fullest communication of Scripture to the people. Yet is it perfectly possible that the best use of such a freedom may often be thus exemplified: when a man, having prayed for light from God, and having striven to live in the spirit of his prayer, and yet finding his own opinion upon a point of doctrine opposite to that of the universal undivided Church, recognises the answer to his prayer and the guide to his mind in the declarations of the creeds rather than in his own single and perhaps recent impressions upon the subject, not thus surrendering his own liberty of judgment, but using it in order to weigh and compare the probabilities of his or the Church's correctness respectively, and acting faithfully on the result.

82. In truth, we have been in an excess upon the subject of private judgment. Civil society could not be held together were every man to withhold his allegiance from the State until he had been able to make up his mind upon the grounds of the theory of its constitution. Not less injurious is the idea, that human beings growing up from infancy in a Christian land are not to accept the truths of religion before trial; however it be just that they should be encouraged to try and prove them in proportion as they arrive at the capacity to do so. And what has been the result of our jealousy? Our impoverishment; our remaining as it were conversant only with the alphabet and first elements of religion. Perpetually busied about what is rudimental, from our extreme

jealousy of all things except such as (we think) we understand, we do not obey the command of St. Paul, to go on unto perfection, and we fail to attain to much of that finished beauty of holiness which is perceived in its accurate and full development. Surely it shall be better, when we accept with more of trust and thankfulness those great truths which are of our patrimony as members of the Church, and when the superfluous portion of that energy, which is now absorbed by the active jealousy of private judgment, shall be more worthily bestowed in accumulating new treasures of stable Divine knowledge, to the end that we may be more thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

83. It may be hoped, then, that when we have more carefully considered the doctrine of the Church, as it is proposed to us by the authority of Holy Scripture, as it is hereafter to be assumed in these pages, and as likewise it is prescribed to us by our own apostolic mother, we shall find that it tends practically to the accomplishment of the great and sacred purposes of the Gospel, bringing us nearer to God, realising and making plain that way of access which is revealed to us, and not suffering us to hang upon the Redeemer through the frailty of any merely intellectual medium, through any mere body of propositions, however holy and excellent, but attaching us to Him, and habituating us to view ourselves as attached to Him by the most intimate and the most enduring of all bonds, a vital incorporation.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SACRAMENTS.

Significationibus pascimur, ut ad res ipsas perdurantes pervenire possimus.—S. Aug. in Ev. Joan. Tract. xvii.

1. Mode of treating. 2—7. The Scriptural and ancient Doctrine. 8—14. Modern perversion, and its several bearings upon different cases. 15—33. Of certain specific uses of the Sacraments. 34. Summary view. 35—38. Cases of the Romanists, and of certain divisions of Protestants compared. 39—42. Practical warning to follow the true middle way.

1. Adhering to the practice which seems to me most accordant with the intention of these pages, I shall, in treating of the Sacraments of the Church, endeavour to contemplate them rather practically than scientifically. I shall not argue at any length upon the proofs of that idea or doctrine of Sacraments which is embodied in the services of the Church of England, and which exhibits them as institutions significant indeed and symbolical, but likewise as not merely calculated to stimulate in the way of extrinsic motive our spiritual affections, and so to draw upon us spiritual benefit, or qualify us for its advantageous and cordial reception; not even merely as entailing by a direct process benefit of that nature, but as actually *consisting* of two parts—the one outward and a sign, the other inward and a power; so that he who has the Sacrament has both, and he who has the outward part alone without the inward, has not the Sacrament any more

than he who has the Old Testament without the New has the Bible. A member of the Church has a right, at least *primâ facie*, to assume that she teaches, upon any given point, in accordance with Scripture; and my main object will be, not critically to examine and vindicate her interpretation of the sacred text, but to show in the tendencies of her teaching, as it respects the matter now before us, adaptation and conduciveness to the Divine purpose, declared in the Gospel, to restore and sanctify our ruined nature.

2. But lest this should be interpreted into a depreciation of the supreme and ultimately exclusive authority of Scripture, I refer briefly to some of those passages which have ever been held to teach the efficacy of Baptism, proper and intrinsic, yet capable undoubtedly of being nullified by inadequate or repugnant conditions in the state of the receiver. We may, indeed, find authorities in the Sacred Volume for this doctrine, as many and as clear as can be cited in support of the greater portion of the distinctively Christian doctrines. "Except a man be born of water and of the spirit (ἐξ ὕδατος καὶ πνεύματος, denoting unity and simultaneity of act), he cannot enter the kingdom of Heaven."* "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."† "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved."‡ "Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins"‖—ad-

* John, iii. 5. † Matt. xxviii. 19. ‡ Mark, xvi. 16.
‖ Acts, xxii. 16.

dressed to St. Paul, when already penitent and already called. "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death." "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin."* "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."† "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word."‡ "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God."‖ "According to his mercy he saved us by the washing" (more correctly, bath) "of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost."§

3. These are but a few of the texts which may be urged as importing by the interpretation, whether of common sense without prejudice, or of unanimous Christian antiquity, that a spiritual power and operation belong to Baptism. Is not that, however, a yet more conclusive evidence, at all events a most appropriate consummating testimony when added to the more immediate declaration of doctrine, which we derive from the general tenor of the Apostolic teaching? We find them offer to the Pagan or the Jew, first, repentance and faith, and then baptism. But we know the doctrine of a new life was essential. Where, then, do we hear of it in their intercourse with the unconverted, unless it be covered under the outward form of Baptism, its initiatory process? But how stands the case

* Rom. vi. 4, 11. † 1 Cor. vi. 11. ‡ Eph. v. 26.
‖ Col. ii. 12. § Tit. iii. 5.

with the converted? Still more conclusively. Here we have that essential change, that passing from death to life, the very purpose of the Gospel, so often spoken of, but always retrospectively. The new birth is never held out to the baptized as a thing yet to be attained, but is often designated as a thing possessed. On the other hand, the new life is indeed described as requiring renewal day by day, but renovation and replenishment are essentially different from initiation. We touch not now upon the question, who are capable receivers of the Sacrament of Baptism; but earnestly contend, that, according to the faith once delivered to the saints, Baptism is a rite involving in its complete idea the exercise of a spiritual power, whose office it specifically is to impart a principle of spiritual life.

4. As regards the Holy Communion, our Church teaches a similar doctrine. She does not feel that the solemn words of the institution of the Eucharist are adequately, that is scripturally, represented by any explanation which resolves them into mere figure; and she fears lest the faithful be thus defrauded of their consolation, and of their spiritual food. Accordingly she believes, that there is a real though not a carnal truth in the solemn words, "this is my body," "this is my blood;" in just conformity with the precept in which St. Paul desires us to discern, that is, to discriminate from common elements, the body and blood of the Lord.* So also we are taught by him, that the cup in

* 1 Cor. xi. 29.

that Sacrament is "the communion" (or participation) "of the blood of Christ;" and the bread, "the communion of the body of Christ."* And the Eucharist is also appealed to as the consummation of our unity in Christ: "for we, being many, are one bread, *and one body, for* we are all partakers of that one bread." That is to say, our being partakers of that one bread is the instrument not only of our being one bread by unity, as of a physical constitution, but of our being one body, which we are spiritually and in Christ. Here, therefore, is also comprised the idea of a spiritual power feeding that new life, which we have in the Church or body of Jesus Christ our Redeemer, and which was first given us at our Baptism, when we became by covenant, whether for good or for evil, members of that Church or body.

5. Such is the substantial ground-work of religion laid by the inspired writers in the doctrine of the Sacraments. Thus viewed, it does not dwell in fancy, in speculation, or even in argument; but it is exhibited as dependent upon an actual food, received like the manna from God, and supplying, after the type of manna, nutriment in forms and elements too subtle, too inward, for human sense or intellect to reach. Can we fail to recognise the beauty of such a doctrine, and its adequacy to our need? In the body as well as in the mind, we are fallen creatures: in the body as well as under mental conditions of a human kind, came our Lord

* 1 Cor. x. 16, 17.

and Saviour; and now, accordingly, He applies His medicine, even the participation of Himself, to the whole of that nature, which in all its parts alike requires and responds to His effectually renovating power; "My soul hath a desire and a longing to enter into the courts of the Lord; my heart and my *flesh* rejoice in the living God."*

6. And so taught the ancient Church. Her idea was of an intrinsic virtue, residing by Divine appointment in the Sacraments, but capable of being intercepted in that passage to the soul of man by his unfaithfulness and insincerity. Thus at once was preserved in this true belief a lofty conception of the Sacraments, and a security against their profanation by any such false supposition as that they work mechanically and irresistibly.

7. It is almost superfluous to cite passages in illustration of a position so generally recognised; yet it may be observed, in conformity with this representation, that we find St. Augustin going so far as to say,† "*Optimè Punici Christiani baptismum ipsum nihil aliud quam salutem vocant.*" There cannot be a stronger assertion of a power properly belonging to and residing within this ordinance. But, on the other hand, he teaches as follows:‡ "*Cum igitur boni et mali dent et accipiant baptismi sacramentum, nec regenerati spiritaliter in corpus et membra Christi coædificentur nisi boni, profecto in bonis est illa ecclesia,*

* Ps. lxxxiv. 2. † De Pecc. Mer. i. 24.
‡ De Unit. Ecclesiæ, 21 (on Cant. 1).

cui dicitur, sicut lilium in medio spinarum, ita proxima mea in medio filiarum." That is to say, when there is in the recipient the inherent incapacity, the disqualifying condition of a will averse from God, the Sacrament is frustrate, and disappointed of its legitimate effect: in fact, it is not complete; it loses not an accompaniment or a consequence, but a *portion* of itself: according to the sound doctrine of the Catechism, which teaches that the outward sign alone does not constitute the Sacrament, but that the visible act, and the inward spirtiual grace, are alike *parts* of it, which, by their combination, make up its substance.*

* There is, indeed, an important verbal question which may be raised on the meaning of the word Sacrament, which appears to exhibit considerable diversity of sense. For instance, we find St. Augustin write thus (Exp. in Ev. Joannis, Tr. xxvi.)—*Accipere potest sacramentum nolens*, of the Eucharist. And again, *Hoc ergo totum ad hoc nobis valeat, dilectissimi, ut carnem Christi et sanguinem Christi non edamus tantùm in sacramento, quod et multi mali.* (Exp. in. Ev. Joannis, Tr. xxvii.) It appears, from a great variety of passages, that he uses the term most commonly as denoting the sign alone, together with which he considers that the substance is, in all right recipients (as for instance infants at baptism), realised, and to which it is attached; but he does not, in such cases at least, comprehend the substance under the word *sacramentum*, as has been generally done in later periods of the Church. The term is used very constantly as importing type or figure, that is one part only of the rites now called Sacraments, but perhaps always such a figure or sign as is closely united with some real corresponding antitypc and substance. Thus he writes, "*Sed forte hoc exigitur a nobis, utrum habeat aliquod sacramentum quadraginta sex annis ædificatum templum.*" Inattention to this variation in the sense of the *term* might lead to embarrassment; of course it is essentially distinct from variation in the *doctrine*. Further, under the term Sacrament, I deal only with those two institutions which our Church declares to be "generally neccssary to salvation." (See also S. Aug. Exp. in Ev. Joannis, Tr. xii. "in Spiritu nascimur verbo et sacramento," "Tr. xv. plena mysteriis et gravida sacramentis." And see a letter of Dr. Doddridge, "Diary and Correspondence," vol. ii. p. 339.)

8. But, for this ancient and true doctrine, we find substituted in many of the common opinions of the day, a very defective one. The second part of the Sacrament is in two ways forgotten. First, by those who have never truly thought upon spiritual religion. From them nothing else could be expected. Regarding the doctrine of a new life as a fanatical invention, they escape, by the never-failing remedy of figurative interpretation, from the numerous passages of Scripture in which it is pointedly expressed; they do not look for the actual existence of a corresponding principle anywhere, and therefore of course not in the Sacrament: which it follows that they reduce to a bare sign or badge. But, secondly, the truth is injured likewise by those who, having thought upon the matter, and being distinct believers in the necessity of a spiritual life by grace, have, however, forgotten that that grace is a *part* of the Sacrament, and that, therefore, it of course resides therein. They rather consider, that the efficacy of faith in the mind of the receiver is so stimulated into activity by the act and circumstances of the reception, considered as an impressive solemnity, that a spiritual grace is in the worthy superadded to the Sacrament or sign.

9. It may, however, be said, if, on the one hand, you admit that without faith in the heart of the receiver no benefit is derived from the ordinance; and if, on the other, it be held that, with faith in the heart, benefit is realised at and with it, do not the two ideas coincide under these conditions, and what practical difference remains?

10. As regards these receivers, who, being adult, are also faithful, there does not appear, at first sight, any practical difference of great importance; yet we cannot but apprehend that the doctrine which regards a Sacrament as a rite endowed by the Redeemer with essential sacredness and intrinsic power, conduces even in this case much more to reverence, and therefore to edification: besides, that if it be the truth, this is at once enough. But the practical difference is broad and palpable, indeed, when we consider the case of those who are either not faithful, being adult, or who are not adult: and this, in countries called Christian, is the case of almost the entire population.

11. For, in the first case, that namely of intelligent but unfaithful receivers, if we follow the modern and diluted notion of Sacraments, we are in great hazard of losing one moiety of the Scripture doctrine—namely, that the ordinances of the Church are a savour of death unto death, when they are not a savour of life unto life. Doubtless the sin and danger of sacramental profanation would still be taught sincerely by pious men, even under the supposition that the Sacrament was no more than a sign: but it could neither be perceived so clearly, nor enforced so effectually. The amount and guilt of all acts of profanation must vary, in proportion as in each the wickedness of man is brought into close and evident juxtaposition with something immediately belonging to the Divine attributes. Now, doubtless, under this definition it will be profane to go to what we deem the token of a holy thing without a temper corresponding to the sacred-

ness of the thing betokened: but is it not much more profane, is not the sin much more vividly exhibited, is it not shown to bear a distinct and far more aggravated character, and is not the sense of it more strongly brought home, if we view a man as becoming an actual partaker of that, whereof God has willed holy powers and virtues to be part and parcel, with a heart directly opposed to and incapable of those powers and virtues which, nevertheless, he makes deliberate profession of taking into it?

12. The second case is that of persons not adult; and here the effect of throwing the virtue out of the Sacrament into the faith of the receiver, instead of regarding faith in its true light, that is to say, as the condition necessary to ensure and attest the submission of his understanding and his will, has been to induce the false and most dangerous belief, that persons not adult or not conscious are incapable of being made the subjects of spiritual influences. I have read with sorrow, in the popular work of an excellent man,* some taunt to this effect: how can the heart of a child be changed by throwing a little water on his face? The pious writer, when he penned that sentence, did not reflect upon it, or he would have perceived that it contained the seed of all infidelity. For if man is to judge according to his own imaginations of the competency of Divine means, and to deny and renounce effects by anticipation, wherever he conceives that the assigned causes are inadequate to their office, not a shred of Christianity, nor indeed of physical

* Village Dialogues, by the Rev. Rowland Hill.

truth, will remain to us. Accordingly, the Pelagians were those who first disparaged the Sacrament of baptism: and they consistently. Denying the transmitted taint of nature and the inborn principle of disobedience, they might well deny the capacity of the infant to undergo influences strictly remedial and counteractive of these. But how can we, who admit that corruption has been imparted to the nature of the babe, and contend that it is not now such as God originally made it, deny His power to bring it back towards that first condition in any manner or degree that it may please Him?

13. When, however, men had habitually associated sacramental efficacy with the working of the intellect under Divine grace, it was natural enough that they should come to regard that intellectual process as an essential condition of the benefit from above. For what reason, however, is it, that a deliberate operation of the understanding together with the heart is necessary in the adult? As a renunciation, undoubtedly, of the deliberate self-will and self-worship which characterise the developed human nature; that the human will may abdicate, as it were, the throne to which it has no right, in favour of the Divine will. But why, before the understanding is developed, or consciousness attained, should we expect, nay, require, the (impossible) exercise of both? Why should the will abdicate a throne which as yet it has not assumed? Yet though these faculties are not yet (as it were) born, and cannot, and therefore need not work, there is a heart in the infant, and there are affections at

work more or less from the first days of our earthly existence; and, therefore, however small the sphere of its life, yet absolutely requiring, that that life shall be redeemed and sanctified by the grace of Christ.

14. In the spiritual idea, therefore, of the Sacraments, there is contained no more than meets the case of our corruption and infirmity; all that we find there is necessary, in order to avoid the fearful anomaly, that would mar the Divine dispensation, if we found our nature contaminated from the womb, and yet the remedy postponed until that period of intelligence, which so many of us never reach at all; which so many more realise only in the most imperfect degree; which the wisest men have felt to be in themselves, when taken at its best, most defective, and before the full or even moderate attainment of which, so much of real responsibility has grown up, so much of guilt has been contracted.

15. Such being in a rude draught the outline of these great institutions, it next follows to observe that their uses are manifold. In speaking of these, it will be most proper in general to refer to Baptism and the Eucharist jointly, since they have a common leading idea, although some particulars may not be literally applicable to both: and the first of these uses to be noticed is, that, whereas we are compounded of sense and spirit, the Christian religion, addressing itself mainly to the latter, does not, however, leave the former unprovided for, but presents to us rites wherein what is visible and palpable constitutes a portion of the essence. Thus, then, there is provided for the

sensative part of our constitution a handle, as it were, whereby it too, as well as the soul and spirit, may take hold upon religion, and contribute in its own measure to rivet our grasp of that whereby alone we live. In this sense it is, that the Sacraments are signs.

16. The second use of sacramental ordinances on which I remark is this—that they supply a very valuable historical evidence of Christianity. The force of this argument has been systematically developed by that very able writer, Charles Leslie, in his "Short Method with the Deists," where he proposes, by means of the Sacraments, historically to demonstrate, through a *reductio ad absurdum*, the truth of the Christian revelation. If he does not entirely realise terms so rigid, yet he shows, at least, how an institution like the Lord's Supper, avowedly commemorative of a certain event, and avowedly, too, instituted at the period of the event for that purpose, bears upon its very front the strongest moral evidence that itself, and the system which it attests, cannot be forgeries, because those on whom it was attempted to be imposed would in all probability have detected claims which, if false, are so audacious and self-condemning. Here, therefore, the Sacraments are evidences.

17. The Sacraments are the peculiar and distinctive instruments, whereby men receive those essential elements which constitute their unity in Christ. They are appointed to be the universal medium of communion with Him. They are distinguished in some such especial respects from every other means of grace,

that they are properly regarded as occupying a distinct place: not, be it observed, as first instruments of conversion, but as instruments of sanctification to the converted in the cases of adults, while only in the case of infants, who need no conversion from acquired guilt, is a sacrament appointed as the specific means of initiating holiness. If we compare them with other appointed means, their distinctive character, which they claim to bear as means of communion with Christ, and with one another in Christ, will be made more evident.

18. If we compare them, firstly, with public worship, we see at once that attendance on public worship does not pointedly demand or exact from the individual any such direct and substantive participation as is required by the Holy Communion. If we compare them with the preaching of the word, the blessing which belongs thereto is, as a general rule, both inferior and more indeterminate: for the word so preached is mingled with human imperfection; whereas, that which is received in the Sacrament is wholly Divine; and the reasonable assumption that the blessing is realised, is more nearly positive in the act of communicating than in hearing, which is almost entirely passive. If we look to the private acts of prayer and reading of the word, these have no witness but ourselves, and belong to us individually alone, and therefore in a subordinate capacity: for it is in our collective capacity as members of the Church that we are members and, by consequence, organs of Christ; and the purely individual functions of reli-

gion, essential as they are, are yet important chiefly as means to effectuate and establish us in our highest capacity as living portions of His body. Observe, lastly, that a heathen may attend Christian worship, may hear the word, may read, may pray—and yet may remain a heathen: but he cannot, as a heathen, have part in the Sacraments. In short, they are the only ordained means of Christian communion which answer to all the following conditions:—to be public; to be determinate; to imply active participation; to be universally and to be solely applicable to Christians.

19. And on account of this special and comprehensive, though not exclusive, character, they are viewed by the greatest teachers of the Church as being its not only distinctive but constituent ordinances: according to that of St. Augustin, a sentiment often repeated in his works, "*Mortuo Christo lanceâ percutitur latus, ut profluant sacramenta quibus* FORMETUR *ecclesia.*"* And of Hooker:—"We receive Christ Jesus in baptism once, as the first beginner; in the Eucharist often, as being by continual degrees the finisher of our life." † And again:—"Life being therefore proposed unto all men as their end, they which by baptism have laid the foundation, and attained the first beginning of a new life, have here their nourishment and food prescribed for continuance of life in them. Such as will live the life of God, must eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man; because

* S. Aug. Exp. in Ev. Jo. Tr. ix.; and frequently elsewhere.
† Eccl. Pol. v. 57.

this is a part of that diet which if we want we cannot live." * Testimonies these from men whose names, great as they are, are still of infinitely less weight than the fact that they represent the general sentiment of the Church of all ages.

20. Further, as they are specially the means whereby the actual fellowship of Christians is realised, so are they most peculiarly the legitimate witnesses whereby that fellowship is represented and appropriated in their subjective consciousness. By public ordinance they are common to us all. While preaching is apt, and properly apt, to range over various classes, and to dwell upon distinctions which separate man from man, and one form of thought from another, yet not only does this very circumstance often enable us to evade its searching power, but when it reaches its mark, whether for reproof or for edification, it comes to us individually: but the Sacraments are eminently "without respect of persons;" in them Christian brotherhood is entirely realised and represented; the more perfectly because that one which is alone capable of repetition, and which is appointed for our habitual sustenance, requires, nearly as much in its own nature as it does by the law of its Divine Founder, that it should be the joint act of a plurality of persons. Thus they quicken our inward consciousness of being knit one to another in the body of the Saviour; and what is this but, in other words, to say that they continually feed the fountain of the only true permanent benevolence and love? Thus,

* Eccl. Pol. v. 67.

while outwardly they are the badges that separate the kingdom of Christ from the world, inwardly they prevent the contemplations of the individual from contracting into the sphere of self.

21. Again, I would ask whether the idea of the Sacraments, objectively regarded, be not fitted in an especial manner to concentrate and consummate the force of all religious motives, by its appropriate operation through the understanding? The hope of reward is more exalted than the fear of punishment, taken even in that form in which it is the beginning of wisdom; and increasedly so, as our conception of the reward approximates to that of St. John:—"Beloved... we know not yet what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him."* Where our view as to particulars is a blank, but has full satisfaction in the simple anticipation of resembling the Redeemer. Nobler still is the motive of gratitude impelling us to love Him who first so signally loved us. But the sacramental idea of incorporation appears to be a yet nearer and more affecting, a more stringent and piercing argument: it seems to make the most powerful of all forms of appeal of which our nature is susceptible; as combining with every shade of extrinsic inducement, the most vivid representation of a real, though mysterious, and as yet only inchoate, identity.

22. A further use of the Sacraments is, that they are barriers against fanaticism. They who are powerfully impressed with the belief of direct spiritual in-

* 1 John iii. 2.

fluence, are apt to mistake for it mere inward excitement of a human, or sometimes a yet more questionable kind, if they look for it alone, and self-attested to the individual mind, and not as appended to divinely-appointed and general ordinances. They render themselves the sole witnesses of their own accuracy; a course which is surely not according to the mind of Him who disclaimed reliance on his own testimony though it was infallible.* And they refer the determination of the question most vital to our spiritual well-being, to the most delusive of our faculties. Suppose that they pray for Divine illumination—yet their very prayers may be attended with so much of habitual and wilful self-deceit, that they may serve only to afford a new plea to that illusion to which they may have been referable, and which they thus may serve to perpetuate. Great indeed, inexpressibly great, is the value of that kind of intercourse with God, which is directly between Him and the individual mind: but, in truth, its value is heightened from the circumstance that it is checked, and guarded against abuse, by a more independent witness of another kind: and they who most love private prayer should, of all men, be most thankful that God has also attached grace to palpable ordinances, whereof others too are witnesses, which cannot be forgotten, and which are not subject to be frustrated by our inward fluctuations and our inflated estimate of self.

23. But there is another side to this view of the Sacraments. As they are helps against fanaticism,

* 1 John v. 31.

which gives too much credence to insufficient marks of spiritual influence, so are they powerful obstructions to the ingress of that equally dangerous despondency, often tending towards unbelief, which admits doubts of the faithfulness of God's promises into the individual mind, and thus comes to let slip the hope of the Gospel. But when such moods are upon men (and they are not among the least formidable of the temptations of the Evil one), when a mist arises from their internal perturbation, and intercepts the remembrance, or, at all events, the practical sense, of those unnumbered marks of care and love wherewith God attends the Christian along his daily path—is it then no small comfort to be enabled to fall back on these facts, palpable as facts, and not less pregnant than palpable, for they surely speak in terms not to be mistaken of the favour of God towards our souls? Thus they are in this sense like the light-house to the seaman, visible when all other objects are eclipsed, though little heeded in the abundant splendour of the day.

24. Undoubtedly we should reckon as the highest and main use of Sacraments their office of specially and peculiarly imparting to us the participation of the Divine nature. In them the worthy receiver seems to be carried more sensibly near to the presence of Divinity, with less of intervening space or medium, and with less of dependence upon the instrumental energy and active tension of his own faculties, than perhaps in any of those exercises where grace is received through the action of the understanding. It seems as if, in the Sacraments, he might realise more than any-

where else of that serene communion, which is apparently the consummation of all religion. In them our merciful Father takes as it were upon himself the adjustment of the whole instrumentality, which in other cases seems rather to be located within ourselves: to use an illustration from the parable, the approach and the advance, as well as the embrace, seem wholly His;* and if in the whole of our religion we are more specifically recipients than agents, it is here that this momentous truth receives its most accurate and vivid illustration.

25. Yet there is one office (at least) of the doctrine of the Sacraments which has as yet been left untouched, and which is the office most material to the present purpose. Arguments have been offered elsewhere to show that the vitality and efficacy of all the means of grace resides not in what is seen, but in an inward and hidden virtue: that precept, miracle, preaching, reading, praying, are twofold in their nature as religious ordinances: they have a body and a soul. But we are sadly apt to confound them, and to lose the perception of the soul in that of the body, by reason of a certain natural homogeneity that seems to exist between them. And when that confusion is effected, when we are left to depend upon the machinery, and not upon the Divine power that moves it, the very worst of all catastrophes has befallen us, and to the very letter we hold the name, but have lost the power of godliness.

26. But that indiscernible, transcendent energy

* Luke xv. 20.

which is the virtue and life of preaching, and the rest of the functions of the Church, is yet more and far more remarkably illustrated by the manner in which it is known to lie and to work in the Sacraments. For here it comes to us so entirely distinct from its own machinery, that there should be less risk of confounding the two. Here the body, being sensible and not intellectual, is so manifestly distinct from the soul, that we can less easily sink and lose the perception of the latter in that of the former. Here, if we believe in the spiritual nature of the ordinance at all, we must see how different are the outward means, which form the channel of grace, from the grace itself. If we believe that a spiritual gift, of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, is conveyed in the Communion, it is manifest at once how naturally incompetent are the elements of bread and wine to confer such a gift, and how the efficacy of the ordinance is, not merely in its original derivation given from God alone, but likewise, specifically, incomprehensible and preternatural in the method of its operation.

27. There is no reasonable difficulty, indeed, in believing that God may annex any influences, spiritual or otherwise, to a material substance: for how wonderful are those which we know, by the commonest experience, that He does so annex? But when we have realised, in distinct contemplation, this belief of the Communion as an ordinance in which material substances effectually convey spiritual grace to the faithful receiver, we possess a conception of which the elements are more broadly demarcated than where

grace comes through an intellectual instrumentality, and so, in proportion, less liable to be confused; and the natural incapacity of the visible organ, as in the case of Deborah against Sisera, or of David against Goliah, at once attests and magnifies the supreme and invisible Agent.

28. It is true, indeed, that the intellect, and the whole soul of the man, should act, and act energetically, in the matter of the Holy Communion. But the mental activity of the occasion will be found to have reference rather to the self-examination, the prayer, the humiliation, the stirring-up of faith and thankful recollection towards Christ, and of charity towards men; and again to the thanksgiving, intercession, prayer that properly follows it; than to the sacred act of reception itself. It requires not any tumultuous, not even any sensible excitement, but a peaceful coincidence of the will. A mental process, indeed, has prepared us for that reception, but in itself it is passive. Now, doubtless, the attendant exercises are blessed on that as on every other occasion: and even the secondary benefits of the Communion are thus analogous probably to the primary results of some other means of grace. But the main benefit transcends all these, and lies in the Communion itself, by which we being many are made one body, and that one, the body of Jesus Christ the Redeemer. Here we see the notion of spiritual influence simplified to the uttermost: rid of every accompaniment which (if we may use an illustration from visible objects), like the Alps around Mont Blanc, diminish its effect to the eye: concentrated in a point:

so that it may be admitted or denied; but it can hardly be evaded. And evasion of religious truth is, more particularly in the present state of opinion, that which we have most to apprehend, as the easiest and surest mode of arriving at ultimate and effective denial.

29. If any shall say that this is a fanciful distinction, I beg them to consider, whether it be not on the contrary strictly true, that the sign and the substance are sometimes more and sometimes less liable to be confounded, according as the division of their natures is more or less clear and broad. It is easy to supply a practical exemplification. Those who object to the representations of the Deity in human form, as full of imminent peril of idolatry, see no such danger in the representation of the Holy Spirit under the figure of a dove: and the primitive Church seems to have used freely the symbol of a lamb, at a time when there was no painting or sculpture even of our Incarnate Redeemer. Surely it was not because these signs, if mistaken for the things signified, would have entailed less guilt and hazard. On the contrary, the worship of a lamb or of a dove would have implied a more base and grovelling idolatry, than the same undue honour paid to the form of a man, which, at least, bears in some sense the image of God. But it was for this cause: that the association in the one case was likely to become confusion, in the other; by reason of the wholly distinct natures of the emblem and the reality, it was hardly within the limits of probability that the objects should be thus erroneously blended. And so

I freely admit that the regard to Sacraments, when it is directed to the form only, and not to the living inward power, is a thing more degraded and materialised than the superstitious veneration often paid to intellectual force or art in preaching. But the snare is practically much nearer and more dangerous in the latter instance, because the human mind, when awakened into activity, finds much more gratification for its pride in idolising a very conspicuous and energetic exercise of its own powers, than water or bread and wine.

30. It may be, indeed, that when the idea of spiritual grace, properly so called, has become feeble in regard to every other object, it will not long efficaciously survive in our conception of the Communion: and we may succeed in rendering even this ordinance carnal, humanised by attempts to explain away its operation under the common laws of the understanding, and reduced into figure and shadow. But truth brings with it to us no promise of absolute self-maintenance in any particular branch of the Church: and, therefore, looking to these laws of adaptation and probable efficacy, which God has given to be our guides in all the affairs of life, what we have to inquire is, whether the Communion does not exhibit those guarantees of our faith in an eminent and peculiar degree? It is, indeed, enough if it can be shown that the Sacraments are calculated to be the most permanent witnesses of the true doctrine of spiritual grace: that in our belief of the Communion, the doctrine should, and apparently might, hold its ground, even when elsewhere hazarded

or dislodged, and might thus prepare for its general restoration: and that, on the other hand, in happier circumstances, when it pervades and animates the whole body of our religion, yet in the conception of that sublime rite it is placed with peculiar propriety, and towers, as it were, more than ordinarily distinct and conspicuous.

31. It is, perhaps, better than a mere fanciful observation, that the directions of St. Paul to the Corinthians, not to use the Communion as a common meal, and his referring them to their own houses to eat and to drink in, appear to serve an important purpose, as does the general practice of administering the elements in very small quantities. For physical support they avail little, by reason of their minuteness: and thus they leave the ground yet more clear for the belief of a distinct spiritual influence than would have been the case if, constituting a sufficient meal, they had left room for those who materialise in religion to argue that they had merely a natural manner of operation.

32. The same arguments apply to Baptism. We need not now discuss in further detail the doctrine of the Church concerning this ordinance, but I would remark upon it that, as the act of washing with water, however beautifully significant, is notwithstanding (like those of eating and drinking) one of the commonest acts in our daily life, it is thus kept the most obviously distinct from the idea of the spiritual operation which it symbolises, and which is annexed to it.

33. This consideration is even stronger, and greatly

stronger, with reference to infant Baptism. No one who attaches the belief of a spiritual operation to infant Baptism, *can* rationalise upon the subject so as to explain it away into the common action of the faculties, because that action has not commenced at the time when the benefit is conferred. And, further still, where Baptism is practised by affusion instead of immersion, according to the indifferent custom of the Church, the outward act becomes as it were a sign of a sign, not an actual ablution but the representation of one; and the inward act, if there be not a disposition precluding apprehension and belief altogether, will naturally and easily be apprehended with some peculiar distinctness.

34. And thus in the midst of all the threatening symptoms of tendency towards unbelief and disorganisation with which the age abounds, we are led, not wholly it may appear without reason, to regard the Sacraments as the chief and central fountain of the vital influences of religion when the Church is in health and vigour, as their never wholly obstructed source when she is overspread with the frost of indifference, as their last and innermost fastnesses when latent infidelity gnaws and eats away the heart of her creed and of all her collateral ordinances.

35. Now it may be useful to consider what additional light history throws upon our subject; and in the first place as regards the Church of Rome. The dispassionate inquirer will allow, that amidst whatever mass of error and corruption, she has never either avowedly or virtually extirpated the idea of a superior

and invisible agency in the concerns of the world. She may sometimes almost have buried that idea beneath the load of its trappings, yet it has always lain at the heart of her religious services in general, and has retained a real even if a feeble and oppressed vitality. Nor does it appear that the churches in communion with the papal see are ever likely to become an infidel body, however infidelity, generated by recoil from what we consider their superstitions, may afflict many of their members, or bruise them in that which they deem and believe their head. Now we well know that they have been in the extreme opposite to that of rationalism, which has here been deprecated: they have, as it were, absorbed and resolved the whole or a large portion of religion into acts purporting to be sacramental, necessitating little of mental exercise, and compatible of course with very great coldness and deadness of heart.

36. But if we look to the very opposite case of such of the Calvinistic communities as, having escaped from papal bondage, have also become rationalistic, we find exemplified that melancholy case in which the last state of a man is worse than the first. Men are astonished and dismayed to find that the Calvinistic churches of Geneva, of England, of Ireland and of Germany in part, and of New England, having set out with the very highest doctrine of grace, have in the course of a few generations utterly lost it, and the fire upon their altars is indeed extinct. To their case we must add with regret that of the Quakers, or Society of Friends, many of whom in England are said to be

receding fast from their Catholic doctrines; while in America, their principal seat, the larger portion of them have avowedly and notoriously rejected them, although it affords some consolation to find that a minority still adhere to the belief of their fathers.

37. Both these classes of religionists, while they have differed in many points, have agreed in falling short of the true doctrine of Sacraments. The Calvinists and Quakers alike viewed them as figures; but while the former retained them in that capacity, the latter, holding that Christianity was a dispensation of substances and not of shadows, have, by the combination of a true principle with an erroneous allegation, proceeded in natural consequence to abolish them. The Calvinists viewed them as appropriate signs, addressing themselves to man in the way of extrinsic motive alone (I speak of the followers, and not their chief, whose tenets they very materially attenuated); the Quakers did not consider, apparently, that such stimulants were required, but thought that inward light without any external accompaniment satisfied our wants.

38. Our duty is not to condemn them, but to learn and to take warning. To say no more of the Quakers, it is clear that we cannot find fault with the early Calvinists for ascribing too little in quantity to the energy of Divine grace, for they believed it to be sole and resistless in its operation, even perhaps overriding and superseding the action of the will; but then they made the conscious mind its proper, and more, its exclusive channel. They would ever be handling it

with the understanding; they were not satisfied with that idea of the Sacraments, in which God, as it were, says to man, "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it." They feared the notion of receiving spiritual blessing through the instrumentality of a sensible act, lest it should lead to the idolatry which had prevailed in connexion with an exaggerated form of that belief; and we dare not say that it was a root of pride in them which caused this course. They were holy men; but its result has been to reduce Divine revelation to the measure and standard of that thing, so poor in itself, though endowed with so noble capabilities—the actual human mind; and thus it is that we are led, nay compelled, to observe, that while on the one hand a spiritual life has been preserved in the Sacraments, upon the other it has been lost with them.

39. While we read in the history of these variations the admonitions necessary for our own security, and while we consequently remain careful and earnest to maintain the belief of a spiritual power residing in the Sacraments of the Church, let it not be supposed that that danger of which we have here written is the only one. It is the prevalent and besetting peril of our own day, and of the religion of our own day; and this is enough not to justify only, but to oblige us to direct our main watchfulness against it. We cannot but feel how the temper of the age tends to refer all matters, public and private, social and religious alike, to the jurisdiction of our present, or, in Scripture language, our carnal nature, working of course by the understanding; and how this creeps upon us in the

form of habit unperceived, so that the belief of a higher agency grows alien and unfamiliar, and alarms us when contemplated in singleness of aspect. Here therefore is indicated our first duty of watchful avoidance.

40. But it never can be otherwise than a high and important function to maintain the due analogy between God's ordinances of all kinds, and our view of them. The result of the course here recommended might be a relapse into Romanism, were we not to keep in mind some further caution. It was the tendency of Romanism to lay the general understanding of mankind asleep, instead of exercising that faculty in every one according to its capacity. Sacramental efficacy, and the efficacy of works performed as such (the former an exaggeration, the latter a fiction), threatened to monopolise the name and honour of religion. If Protestantism has avenged (so to speak) this injury, its vengeance may entail a greater, a more irremediable detriment, but there is no reason why we should be subject to either the one mischief or the other.

41. The Church contemplates with equal eye the whole of God's ordinances. It is not any blind sacramentism—any such regard even to these sublime ordinances as should imply depreciation, or a contracted view of others—that she would inculcate. The energy of preaching and of prayer, the high duty of searching the Divine Word, and bringing all the faculties of the mind to bear, according to our utmost

opportunities, upon the work of religion: these are all in her contemplation. She is in herself well armed against the peril that besets Romanism on the one hand; and it is the defect of her frail children, not of her fixed institutions, from which we have anything to apprehend upon the other.

42. Why should we not suffer the whole mind of God to take effect among us? He has, it seems, given us certain ordinances as means of grace, which, operating through the active faculties, go to insure the wakefulness of the intellect, and to carry it along in the work of religion. On the other hand, to preclude its encroachments, to repress pride, to sustain weakness, to refer us constantly and primarily to the state of the affections, to associate and bind us together in Christ, to manifest our entire dependence upon Him, and our high privilege in being so dependent, He has instituted other means of grace in which we are not at all, strictly speaking, co-operators, but mere receivers, though with certain preconditions. Thus His mercy provides for the entire nature of man; and supplies us with safe-guards, if we will but use them, against the opposite dangers that beset either theory of half truth—that which refers all grace to the human understanding as its channel, and that which, ascribing little or no spiritual advantage, as respects the mass of Christians, to its agency, deals with it insidiously, as with a hated foe, lulls it into religious torpor, and thereby prepares it to become the ready instrument of unbelief.

CHAPTER V.

THE APOSTOLICAL SUCCESSION.

1, 2. Course proposed. 3—6. Questions suggested on Government and Succession in the Church. 7—12. Presumptions thereupon. 13—27. Of the Proofs of Succession from the Apostles generally. 28—31. How distinguished from Civil Succession. 32—36. Immense importance of this principle. 37. Succession, as in the Episcopate. 33—54. Upon the proofs of it, and the objections to them. 55, 56. Why the evidence is narrative not dogmatic. 57—59. There is a further bar to Presbyterian claims. 60. True issue. 61, 62. Testimony of the Church of England. 63—66. Scope and limits of these inquiries. 67—87. Tendencies of the doctrine of succession in various aspects. 88, 89. Conclusion.

1. Even for those who are possessed of the extensive learning, and of the exegetical talent, which are absolutely necessary for such a purpose, it would be hopeless to attempt giving, in a work of such design as this, any satisfactory epitome of the controversies, partly theological and partly historical, which have been connected with the Apostolical Succession in the Church. In the latter part of the second century of the Christian era, the subject came into distinct and formal view; and from that time forward it seems to have been considered by the great writers of the Catholic body a fact too palpable to be doubted, and too simple to be misunderstood. Irenæus* and Tertullian,†

* Adv. Hær. iii. 3. 1, 4. † De præscript. c. 20, 21. c. 32.

in their defences of the Christian faith against heresies, which then grew rife, argued not for but from the constitution of the ministry in the Christian Church, which they had received from their fathers, which as they alleged the Apostles had established, and which they deemed the most effectual and available testimony to the truth of such interpretations of Holy Scripture, as were advanced by themselves and denied by their opponents. But as every doctrine of our religion, however capable of being stated in a summary form and promptly received by a believing heart, has in turn become the text of almost interminable discussion, and has to some individuals or sects appeared problematical or unsound, while by the Church at large it has been held indubitable, so the doctrine of succession in the holy ministry, though not until a later period than perhaps any other subjected to scepticism, has within the last two centuries been deliberately disputed, upon the grounds of its historical credibility.

2. Those who wish to weigh in series all the points which have been raised from the time of Salmasius and of Blondel until the present day, and to decide upon the merits of each separate plea before they will consent to arrive at a practical conclusion, must dedicate to the task more time and labour than the great majority even of the best educated classes could afford to devote to it; and assumption upon the credit of others must, after all, be in general our resort. But there is no reason why, according to our means, we should not endeavour to obtain original acquaintance

at least with the grounds of a controversy so full of deep religious interest, and so fertile of the most important positive results upon our law of duty as Christians; and protesting earnestly against being supposed to pretend either to possess an acquaintance with the subject, or to offer an adequate representation of it, I shall nevertheless attempt to exhibit in a sketch of the slightest and most rapid description, some of those historical *data*, cleared in great measure from the clouds of subsequent dispute, upon which the general doctrine of Apostolical Succession rests, and in virtue of which it forms the basis of practice in the Anglican Church, as it does with the great majority of the Christian world. But although thus attempting to indicate the outlines of the historical investigation sufficiently to give a view of the question really at issue, I shall give more attention to the general aspects, and to the ethical tendencies and results of the principle itself.

3. Our Redeemer, as we are henceforward to assume, founded upon earth a visible and permanent society, cohering, and intended always to cohere, by means not only of a common profession of belief, but also of common and public ordinances, which by their outward form constituted and sealed the visible union of believers; while by the inward spiritual grace attached to them, they were also destined to regenerate men in Christ, and to build them up in Him; and thus to constitute their inward and essential as well as their external oneness.

4. Now there has been in practice the closest connexion between the doctrines of a visible Church, and that of a spiritual grace in the Sacraments, and that of an Apostolical Succession in the ministry; so that in general they have been received or rejected together. And they are also, as objects of abstract speculation, in close alliance. Accordingly if we proceed to consider the results of these conclusions drawn from the foregoing chapters, we shall find that they suggest the following among other questions:—If a society were founded by Christ, does not this imply the foundation of a government? If ordinances of grace were established, did they not require to be entrusted to the hands of the persons constituting that government for their permanent conservation? Did the Saviour then make any specific provisions for the government of the society which He had thus founded? If so, did He frame a scheme of government, and leave it as a charter to the body of those who believed in Him, and give it in charge to His followers at large to fill up the offices constituted in that scheme? Or did He empower a college of selected persons to act in the offices which He established, and intrust to them plenary powers of government over the society? Or did He even go farther than this, and by instituting the society in their persons, thus restrict himself to its virtual or potential, and leave to them its actual or historical formation? If so, were the powers of those persons wholly or in part transmissible, or were they to expire with their lives? If they were transmissible,

and if therefore they have been transmitted, in whose hands are they now to be found? Does the evidence of the identity of the society, and consequently of its continued possession of true and valid ordinances, depend in whole or in part upon the continued transmission of those powers as one of its conditions? How far can any analogy be drawn from the idea of succession in national or political society? And how are we to establish our historical connection with those to whom the promises and the powers of the Gospel, the sum and substance of our hopes, were sensibly given by the Redeemer?

5. An opinion has been held by some, to which it may be most convenient to make in this place a brief allusion, which, if it were accurate, would indeed supersede all such discussions as that here entertained, namely, that there need be no personal succession, no visible perpetuity, except such as may loosely be said to be constituted by persons successively holding the same doctrines; and that therefore a company of orthodox believers formed, to suppose a case, without human intervention of any kind, as for example in the heart of Africa, would truly and literally form a part of the Apostolical Succession, by virtue of doctrinal resemblance.

6. Now the perpetuity of doctrine is in itself undoubtedly of the very first importance, and Jewel, for example, has insisted upon it in his Apology against those who had the personal succession, (those, namely, of the Church of Rome,) but who, as he argued, had

apostatised from the truth. Bossuet, I apprehend, would have adopted nearly the same ground in controversy against the Church of England, and would have held the succession of persons and the continuous identity of doctrine to be alike and absolutely requisite to a legitimate Church order. But if it were attempted to insist on succession in doctrine as the sole condition of the essence of a Church, any such proposition would be self contradictory, inasmuch as that which would be thus perpetuated, would not be a society at all, but a creed or body of tenets. And we have already arrived at the conclusion that the Church is an actual and historical society, whose definition therefore as such, necessarily requires some form or other of common, that is not merely similar but consciously and systematically combined action, and is by no means satisfied by the simple fact that any number of persons think alike on a particular subject. And further such action must be public and palpable, or the institution existing by virtue of it could not be visible. No mere sameness of tenets therefore is sufficient for the perpetuity of the Church.

7. Association, of whatever kind, necessarily and obviously implies much more than a mere aggregation of units; and the action of an association implies, in like manner, much more than the concurrence of a majority of a mere aggregation of units. Wherever there is combination, there is something over and above the sum total of individual agencies: there is joint action, and that joint action requires a law and

an organ. That law is usually a constitution, and that organ is a government. The former may be in the breast of the latter. The latter may, where the purposes of the association are both limited and definite to the last degree, be superseded by the former; but in every other case, and the exceptions are so trifling and equivocal, that we may well say in every case, where there is a society there must be a government, a centre of life, a power acting on its behalf, determining and executing its corporate acts, and also controlling and commanding the movements of its individual members, so far as they are liable to be modified by the laws and purposes of the body.

8. Nor is this general principle in any manner contravened by the supposition that the existing authority has been, in any given association of men, derived immediately from the will of the majority; for still the binding efficacy of the will of the majority is itself a principle not original, but derived, and does itself necessitate the supposition of some anterior law, in virtue of which the majority is empowered to carry with it the action of the whole. If the sands of the sea-shore were each and all endowed with the faculty of will, there would be no law among them whereby the fewer should follow the more numerous. Wherever such a law exists, it is only in virtue of some common constitution whereby multitude is reduced, *quoad* certain purposes, to unity, and not in virtue of any right founded upon mere numerical superiority. And there is no surer mode of coming to the demonstration that

the foundations of civil society lie deeper than in the will of man, than admitting the main principle of those who advocate that theory, namely, the will of the majority as the rule of civil action, and then inquiring by what law it is that the few are morally bound to submit, to allow their individuality within certain limits to be overruled, upon no reason recognised by them, but merely under the authority of numerical preponderance.

9. A society must however have, and absolutely presupposes, an actual government as well as an original, anterior, constituting law. For the majority of its individual members cannot be perpetually speaking and acting in the corporate capacity; they must have a determinate organ, or else the will by which affairs are to be directed could not be elicited in a palpable form nor take practical effect. Even then, upon the extreme and lowest of all political theories, upon the theory of those who sum up social right, the πολιτικὸν δίκαιον, in a majority of suffrages, an anterior law must be appealed to in order to render the obedience of the minority obligatory, and that law must communicate an unity of being, under which the weaker follow the stronger, as in the case of passions contending in the same mind, or opposite forces in the same body. It would appear therefore that anterior necessity, or the reason of the case, required, that a government should be founded in the Church, as an essential part of the realised idea of human society.

10. And if the society so founded required by its very

idea a government as a part of its original foundation, while it is regarded only as an outward union, how much is that necessity corroborated when we take into view its inward nature! How wonderful is the idea of the Christian Church! A power appointed to cope with all the opposing forces of the unbelieving world, and yet more with all the bitterly, though more subtly, hostile influences which the breast of every man professing allegiance to the Saviour supplies; appointed, therefore, to struggle continually with enemies dwelling actually in the breasts of its defenders, and sometimes in forms so subtle as to be wholly unperceived by them, and yet to be administered by the hands of men, those men without the advantages either of perfect sanctity, or of infallible knowledge; and the details of the history of this body to be regulated in general by the instrumentality of second causes, without any interruption or suspension of the ordinary laws that govern the world! What paradox is there so astonishing! Nay, what moral contradiction could be so violent and absurd, until we supply in this description the idea of a Divine power, working in and under appointed instruments; and because Divine, therefore adequate to its purposes whatever they may be, and working under the forms of those institutions which we call the ordinances of the Church, especially of the Sacraments.

11. Now it surely would be a supposition most repugnant to all antecedent probability, that the administration of such ordinances, under such circum-

stances, would be committed to the members of the society at large; and this for several reasons. First, because of the high and mysterious nature of the connection between their outward form and their substance, and of the blessings they convey, we should expect to find them in the hands of those whose function in life it is especially to know and guard the treasures of Christianity. Secondly, because they are not to be imparted to all men irrespectively of their spiritual qualifications; but their right reception is to be connected with a sound faith and a holy life; therefore their administration becomes a matter of government and discipline, and one too requiring the best, nay, indeed, much more than the best, discernment, that is to be found among men for its right management; from whence it seems to follow, that as different persons are adapted in very various degrees for such an office, and as the mass are not at all fit for it, while the very best are but imperfectly capable of its discharge, that it should be kept in the hands of a selected body of persons, the most suitable that can be secured. And as a fearful profanation is implied in all cases of abuse in such a matter, and as they must also tend to lower and to enfeeble the belief of the faithful in the efficacy of ordinances on which they so much depend, and finally result in the disorganisation of the society at large, all our anticipations will thus more determinately rest upon some constitution which shall limit and reserve in some way the handling of those holy ordinances. The administra-

tion of civil laws, by which social order and the commonwealth subsist, is not laid open to the society at large, but is entrusted and confined to those who are presumably most competent; and in like manner, but with reasons greatly enhanced in force, we never could expect that the right use of the Sacraments, upon which the admission and continuance of membership in the Church depend, would be free alike to the vicious and the faithful, to the ignorant and to the instructed.

12. As respects the general principle that the offices of the ministry are not to be exercised with warrant from Scripture except by a Divine commission, whether attested by miraculous powers, or by ordinary human witnesses, I know not how a stronger illustration, nay, proof of it, could be desired, than is afforded by the fact that our Redeemer himself was not contented to rely simply on His works, although they were of themselves sufficient to convince the unbiassed mind, but did vouchsafe to receive in the hearing of men the most immediate and distinct verification of His claims to the Messiahship from His Heavenly Father. First, at His baptism, where the voice from Heaven declared, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;"* and next, in the glory of His transfiguration, where the same words were repeated, with the pertinent and emphatic addition, "Hear ye him."† And we may well wonder how it is that man

* Matt. iii. 17. † Matt. xvii. 5.

can be so bold as arbitrarily to dispense with a sanction affording the nearest analogy to that which the Lord himself did not scorn to accept, and which He accepted, doubtless, like the other conditions of His human state, for our instruction and example.

13. Whatever obscurity may attend the origin and first derivations of power in civil governments, there is no room left for controversy in the analogous question as it affects the Church of Christ. When we compare the foregoing anticipations with the fact as it is recorded in Scripture, they are more than realised. For not only was a scheme of government instituted in the Christian society, but the government was actually instituted in the persons of the governors, and the society itself was only instituted in its government. It was thus virtually, rather than literally, instituted, at the time when our Redeemer, before His ascension, gave the Baptismal Charter. By including in the matter of His injunction, "all things whatsoever" He had "previously commanded,"* during His ministry on earth, to His Apostles, he supplied a code of laws; and by committing to certain selected persons the power to administer an initiatory rite of spiritual grace, and to teach in His name until the end of the world, he formally established that body as a government over the future society, which was to receive its organisation from their hands, upon the double basis of the code and of the rites which He had given. So

* Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

that nothing can be more distinctly before us than the origin, at least, of governing power in the Church. Our Lord called together for the solemn occasion not all those who believed in Him;* not the hundred and twenty who afterwards were gathered together in an upper room;† not the five hundred‡ brethren, to whom, however, He had recently been pleased to give ocular assurance of His resurrection; but simply the eleven Apostles, whom he intended to constitute the depositaries of absolute spiritual power. The limitation is rendered more remarkable by the circumstance that other parts of this closing address reported by St. Mark, are not restricted to the Apostles: those, namely, which relate to personal salvation, and to miraculous gifts, which, as we know, were by no means confined to the ordinary ministry.§ "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved . . . . And these signs shall follow *them that believe:* in my name shall they cast out devils," &c. Thus it is made yet more glaringly manifest that the commission was given to the Apostles, and not to Christians at large.

14. In the Apostles, then, the Christian Church, properly so called, potentially lay, at the moment when our Saviour uttered those sacred and momentous words, which St. Matthew has conveyed to us; but it had no other existence; and, if we take that moment of time for our point of view, we see the heavenly gift arrested, as it were, on its passage from God to man,

* Acts i. 2—13.
† Acts i. 13.
‡ 1 Cor. xv. 6.
§ Mark xvi. 16, 17.

given from Him, but not yet arrived at its destination; not yet communicated to us; just as the loaves and the fishes were, after Jesus had given thanks and broken, and had given them to the twelve to distribute, but before they had actually served them to the multitude. "Go ye, therefore, and teach" (μαθητεύσατε, make disciples of) "all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching (διδάσκοντες) them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." And so it was to remain until the day of Pentecost. Here was committed to the eleven the charge of administering that ordinance whereby men were to be made Christians through a spiritual operation of the Holy Ghost; to be baptized into the name of the Holy Trinity, that with that name, as it were, inscribed upon them, they might be His, and might be known as His, "whose image and superscription" they bear. As nothing can be more elevated than the office, so nothing can be more distinct than the personal appointment to it; the person and the office appeared together, and the subordinate portion of the society is in view no further than as it is represented in the twelve, who were themselves, of course, individual believers requiring to be sanctified and saved, as well as ambassadors for Christ and governors of His Church. So that the power of government in the Church does not admit of being resolved into a merely general form,

* Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

nor can it be truly or even plausibly asserted of it, as of the Divine sanction to civil authority, that it is capable of being realised in any kind of government whatever; be that power what it may, it was manifestly, in its first origin, determinate and specific.

15. And this though a sufficient is by no means the sole declaration of the Apostolical authority. "He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me."* Again, there were seventy, of whom in their official capacity we hear on no other occasion, to whom He gave as it appears a special commission as precursors of His own personal ministry in "every city and place, whither he himself would come."† And to these he said in like manner, "He that heareth you heareth me: and he that despiseth you despiseth me: and he that despiseth me despiseth Him that sent me."‡ Again he said prophetically to Saint Peter:§ "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Again, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me: and he that receiveth me receiveth Him that sent me." ‖ Further, after His ascension: "Then said Jesus to them again, peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on

* Matt. x. 40. † Luke x. 1. ‡ Luke x. 16.
§ Matt. xvi. 19. ‖ John xiii. 20.

them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them : and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained."* And it must further be remarked that the Eucharist, like the Sacrament of Baptism, was committed to the Apostles, not to the whole body of existing believers.

16. But it naturally occurs, that there is here no proof of the perpetuity of the Apostolical power. It might have been needful or advisable that for the first institution of the Christian church a body of men should be appointed with extraordinary qualifications, and with corresponding powers—and yet it might have been ordained that their offices should determine with their lives, and that all the subsequent exigencies of the body, which was to receive from them its first organisation should be provided for by such a machinery of government as its members might, in the due use of their understandings, conclude to be appropriate and sufficient for the purpose. But every such theory is at once and absolutely precluded by the closing words of St. Matthew's Gospel, which are these : "and lo, I am with you alway (the phrase used is peculiarly expressive of unintermitted continuity, *πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας*, 'all the days'), even unto the end of the world."† "With *you* alway"—but how should He be alway, unto the end of the world, with men, whose lives were appointed to determine in the usual course of nature,

* John xx. 21—3. † Matt. xxviii. 20.

or as respected many of them, by the hand of violence at even an earlier period? As our Lord had first instituted the office in the persons, so He now contemplates the office through the persons of the Apostles, and in declaring that He will ever abide with it, He declares and thereby establishes its perpetuity, while He likewise, as is obvious, connects that perpetuity in a peculiar manner with their own personal agency. The power therefore by which the Apostles acted was not to expire with their lives. It was to continue, even to the end of the Christian dispensation. It did not follow that all the powers they held, under all their conditions, were to continue unaltered. The miraculous effusion of the Holy Ghost for example was given without any promise of its miraculous repetition. But the authority to instruct men in the religion of Christ, and to form by baptism that society in His name which we call the Church, is here in express terms declared to be perpetual.*

17. It might however still be conceivable that although the Apostolical office was intended to be in its necessary functions perpetual, yet the individuals who were to fill it might receive their designation to it from

* It is surely well worthy of observation, that while the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost were conferred on the day of Pentecost without any promise of perpetuity, those powers and promises which related to the Apostolic office itself and its continuance, were given in a manner quite distinct, by our Lord himself in His own person between the resurrection and the ascension, as if clearly to separate between them.

an inferior order, or from the members of the church at large: that the persons whose appointment should virtually confer the function, might appoint to it in virtue not of any power specifically conferred for the purpose, but of their general capacity as baptized persons, or as persons empowered to discharge certain other functions in the church of Christ. As for example the succession in a temporal sovereignty does not require the will of a preceding king to establish a subsequent one, but is true in a purely elective as well as in an hereditary, or even a testamentary monarchy, if for the sake of argument we may suppose a constitution permanently framed upon the principle of the English statute which gave to Henry VIII. the power of naming his successor. Against this it will be contended, that the ordained manner of perpetuating the Apostolical office was by a personal authority *from* the Apostles, as well as by a personal succession *to* them.

18. This may be argued, in the first place, from the nature of the case. The contrary supposition in fact depends upon a misconception of the nature of the ministerial office: which is to be regarded not only in the light of duties to be done, but also in respect of the specific powers whereby alone they are rendered practicable. Offices which are entirely within the compass of man's understanding and of his natural power, do not seem to require personal transmission in order to their due continuance: but it is very different with

those which are as entirely beyond our means. Now the Christian ministry is pre-eminently of the latter description. The conversion of the human will and the salvation of the soul are not within human competency: and those graces of the Holy Spirit whereby they are brought about are attached and assured by positive convenant to the ministerial office. They were conveyed by our Saviour to His Apostles; and as they are not original in man, no one has a right to presume that they will be ordinarily possessed except by similar conveyance. God indeed may adopt other modes of transmission than those which He has by express revelation appointed, but reason compels us to say we have no title, nay, that it is it may be feared presumptuous to anticipate any such conveyance, upon the general principle that it is presumptuous to expect any revelation or interposition from God other than what He himself has promised and defined. It follows therefore that only where there is actual transmission have we any antecedent warrant to expect, or any positive authority to affirm, without hesitation, that the Apostolical office is perpetuated.

19. In the second place, the same conclusion may be drawn from passages of Scripture. The whole Gospel is ever represented as a thing to be sent, to be given, to be brought *to* us; not to be extracted from some hidden recess within us; as something, whose origin is wholly extrinsic. Upon the maintenance of this true and living idea of its origin depends the alternative, whether we shall be shaped and moulded by

it, or it by us; and in this its whole issue, and our final destiny, are involved. And therefore, as one should say, there requires to be, in the method of its access to us, a provision for the lively exhibition of this idea of its origin. Thus it is that St. Paul asks of the Corinthians, with the greatest emphasis,* "What, came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only?" And thus St. Augustin† very beautifully asks, in an instance where angels are introduced by St. John in his narrative, "*Isto modo Christi Evangelium, velut a capite usque ad pedes, ab initio usque in finem, significabant esse nunciandum?*" Now it is the doctrine of ministerial succession by commission from the Apostles which makes, and which alone makes, this required provision for representing to us, along with the matter of the Revelation, and as needful to its due reception, this lively idea of its origin.

20. A further and more direct illustration may be drawn from the promise in Matt. xxviii. The words of our Saviour, "I am with *you* alway," have indeed an ample substantial fulfilment, if the Apostles were themselves to propagate, as it were, their own official life, by actually instituting to their own functions the persons who were to succeed them; but we must put a very constrained sense upon the language of our Saviour in order to render it compatible with the mere supposition, that others were to be appointed to fill their places in virtue of some distinct authority neither moved nor controlled by them. But the inference

* 1 Cor. xiv. 36. † In Ev. Jo. Tract. cxxi. on Jo. xx. 12.

which might be drawn from this passage by exegetical examination is more conclusively determined by historical evidence. Nothing can be more clear than that those who governed and ministered to in the Church of Christ, as it is represented in the New Testament, did so by Apostolical authority.

21. In one sense, indeed, there is an exception of considerable extent:—Those who possessed the gifts of direct inspiration, possessed in them the evidence of their own commission, and spake according as they were moved by impulses immediately Divine. Even these, however, were subject, in respect of the exercise of these gifts, to the general powers of government vested in the Apostles.* But this, as considered with respect to the ordinary functions of doctrine and government, forms no exception whatever. There is also the case recorded in Acts i., where we find that Matthias was appointed to fill the place of Judas, the traitorous Apostle. Two persons appear to have been fixed under the direction of St. Peter, by the assembled believers, of whom one was chosen to the Apostolate by God, through the casting of lots. The person so chosen was admitted into the Apostolical College—by what process is not stated in detail. Our translation states that he "was numbered with the eleven Apostles." The Greek appears to imply considerably more: it is, συγκατεψηφίσθη.† But whether or not there be here any allusion to a formal process on the part of the eleven, it is clear that in the choice of Apostles there

* 1 Cor. xii. and xiv. at large; particularly xiv. 37. † Acts i. 26.

was something peculiar and extraordinary, not to be drawn into precedent, as the Apostolic function itself is in respect of inspiration and infallible guidance, without copy; for Paul and Barnabas, the only persons who thereafter became Apostles in the proper sense of the term, were consecrated to their function together under the express and verbal direction of the Holy Ghost.*

22. The only other case, recorded in the New Testament, which has been deemed to bear a resemblance to a religious commission emanating from any other source than Apostolical authority, is that of the seven deacons, whose appointment is recorded in the Acts.† And upon this it is to be observed that these persons were constituted deacons, not by the choice of the Christian community, but by the solemn ordination of the Apostles. "Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom *we may appoint* over this business." (Acts vi., v. 2.) "Whom they set before the Apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them." (v. 6.) The Apostles, indeed, confided to the disciples at large a trust of choosing and offering to them, under peculiar circumstances, certain candidates for this peculiar and subordinate though public office; and the reason of this delegation is obvious. It was the immediate object of the measure to put an end to complaints which had arisen on the score of an unequal distribution of the food which

* Acts xiii. 2. † Acts vi. 1—6.

was held in common by the Jews and Hellenists: and the Apostles, by inviting the participation of the brethren in its execution, rescued themselves from every possibility of the imputation of unworthy motives, and left to them an opportunity of signally exercising the spirit of fraternal kindness. Nor were they slow to avail themselves of the occasion; for the seven persons of whom they made choice appear from their names to have been exclusively of the class from whence the complaint had proceeded. In like manner we find, from other passages, reason to suppose, that it was usual in matters of temporal concern for the Apostles to give to the people of the churches the power of selecting such organs as they thought fit.*

23. We find it recorded that the Gentile disciples at Cæsarea, who believed upon the conversion of Cornelius, were baptized there after the Holy Ghost had fallen upon them; and it is argued, that the rite was performed not by St. Peter himself, but by "certain brethren" who had attended him from Joppa. The words are, "Then answered Peter, 'Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?' And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord." Upon such an argument it may be remarked that the rite may have been administered by that Apostle himself, and the substance of his command or directions may have been that water should be brought: the text says, προσέταξέ τε αὐτοὺς βαπτισθῆναι, which may well

* 1 Cor. xvi. 3. 2 Cor. viii. 19.

mean, he caused the necessary arrangements to be made for their being baptized. But further: this baptism was, if not administered by St. Peter himself, yet administered under the express direction of one who had power to authorise whomsoever he chose for whatsoever purpose he judged fitting; and therefore the act in question was strictly done under the Apostolical commission, and it is quite immaterial whether it was done by his own hand. Some, indeed, are of opinion that offices were performed by the believers at large, in the earlier period of the Apostolic administration, which were afterwards restricted, under the authority of the Apostles, to the ministry; and this theory, whether true or not, is entirely consistent with the doctrine of the Succession and of its exclusive rights.

24. But now as respects the general practice, it is indeed true that the history as well as the doctrine of the Church is for the most part incidentally rather than systematically conveyed in the New Testament. Still enough has been recorded in the one case as in the other to establish, for the edification of all generations, the truth of Apostolic teaching and practice. For Paul and Barnabas,* in their first journey, as we are told by St. Luke, "ordained them elders in every Church." Here was an appointment by Apostolic authority, and an appointment obviously general. The evidence which it affords is filled up by that which the Epistles to Timothy and to Titus supply, in which we find that those persons respectively were stationed to

* Acts xiv. 23.

act as the delegates of St. Paul in Ephesus and in Crete; and this, without controversy, to fulfil purposes which are peculiar to the Christian ministry. And inasmuch as Scripture thus affords us the record of cases which appear in themselves to be of general application, while on the other hand it supplies us with no case of an opposite description, that is of the ordinary exercise of the Christian ministry without Apostolic institution, we are entitled, from combining these two considerations, to regard that command which we read in their practice as not only affirmative but exclusive. And, if it were necessary, it would be easy to refer to the proof which the Scriptures of the Old Testament as well as the New afford, that the functions of those who were appointed to conduct Divine worship were always exercised either by revelation or by commission.

25. And here, then, we have that which is properly termed the doctrine, not indeed of an Episcopal, but of an Apostolical succession; of access to the functions of the ministry only by a power traditionally given from those who first were chosen to proclaim the Gospel and to govern the Church; a title which, perhaps, would be more accurately conveyed, so far as regards one of its characteristics, by another phrase. In so far as we would imply an actual entrance into the office, or a part of the office, of the Apostles, we may speak of Apostolical Succession; but inasmuch as it is needful to comprehend together with this the sister-idea of entrance into their office by their positive and expressed authority conveyed in the rite of ordination,

we must also consider the Apostolical Succession as including Apostolical derivation. Use, however, has sufficiently sanctioned the former phrase to render further explanation needless.

26. The authority of St. Paul is, indeed, express and absolute: "How shall they hear without a preacher, and how shall they preach except they be sent?"* But this has no self-evident application except to the most general form of the principle. It utterly condemns every commission, derived simply from the individual who holds it: it determines that every lawful minister must be sent; but it does not determine who are they that have received from Christ the authority to send. The historical notices of Scripture supply us with the knowledge that this was communicated by our Saviour to the Apostles, and by the Apostles to certain others. The precept of Scripture is to the same effect: "the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."† We can have no right then to assume the office unconferred; for if we may allege that God has given us such and such powers, without historical evidence to authenticate the manner of their conveyance, may we not equally say God has revealed this or that doctrine, not contained in Scripture, upon no other warrant than our own private persuasion of its truth?

27. I shall not here attempt to adduce the copious evi-

* Rom. x. 14, 15.

† 2 Tim. ii. 2.

dence which the uninspired but authentic history and documents of the Church afford, in support of the proposition that her legitimate ministry, subsequently to the death of the Apostles, existed only by derivation from them, and in succession to their charge. But there is one passage which I cannot refrain from citing out of the Epistle addressed to the Corinthians by St. Clement, the fellow labourer of St. Paul, and Bishop of the Church of Rome.* He writes as follows: Καὶ οἱ Ἀπόστολοι ἡμῶν ἔγνωσαν διὰ τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὅτι ἔρις ἔσται ἐπὶ τοῦ ὀνόματος τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς. Διὰ ταυτὴν οὖν τὴν αἰτίαν, προγνῶσιν εἰληφότες τελείαν, κατέστησαν τοὺς προειρημένους, καὶ μεταξὺ ἐπινομὴν δεδώκασιν, ὅπως ἐαν κοιμηθῶσι διαδέξωνται ἕτεροι δεδοκιμασμένοι ἄνδρες τὴν λειτουργίαν αὐτῶν. The controversy upon this passage, as it affects the question between episcopacy and its opponents, may here be let alone, for the purpose of observing the force of the positive and indisputable assertion which it seems to convey, with reference to succession in general as the basis of the Christian ministry, Now let us well observe the statement of this Apostolical Bishop. "And our Apostles," he states, "were aware through our Lord Jesus Christ, that contention would arise respecting the title of the ministry.† For this cause then, possessed of plenary foreknowledge, they appointed the forementioned persons," (that is to say,

* Clem. Ep. I. ad Cor. c. 44. Jacobson, Patres Apostolici, p. 150.

† By ἐπὶ τοῦ ὀνόματος τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς the writer appears to mean no more than ἐπὶ τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς: and by the term ἐπισκοπὴ the function of those whom the Apostles termed ἐπίσκοποι and πρεσβύτεροι indifferently.

bishops or elders, and deacons,) "and subsequently gave a commission,* *that in case of their own death other approved men might succeed to their office.*" I do not say that such a testimony can add to the force of the concluding words of our Saviour's commission, as given by St. Matthew, but it may serve to show both that that commission never lay dormant, and that it reached beyond the lives of those to whom it was intrusted. For thus it appears, first, that an appointment was made of persons to succeed to their office: secondly, that such appointment was made by the Apostles themselves.

28. If, however, we were to regulate our views of the Church by the unrestricted analogies of civil government, we clearly could not adopt the proposition, that the identity of a society depended in any degree upon the regular succession of its rulers. Whereas it would be a legitimate inference from the preceding arguments, that the proofs of the historical oneness of any existing religious body with that body which in the Apostolic period was termed the Church, must be affected by its possessing or wanting such a suc-

* The word ἐπινομὴ is difficult to fix in signification, as it is said only to be used once in Grecian literature, by Plutarch (Vita Alex. c. 35), where it is applied to the spreading of fire; some interpret it as allied to ἐπινομία, the right of pasture; some as a testamentary disposition or arrangement. See Rothe, Anfänge, § 40. In any case it will approximate to the sense I have given. Some make the προειρημένοι the subjects of the verb διδώκασιν, without any warrant, as it seems to me, either from grammar or from sense; but without impairing one part at least of the import of the passage, as it implies, namely, that the ministry was intended to be derived by personal succession, whether to the charge of the Apostles, or to that of those whom they appointed.

cession: because the Church was instituted by Christ, as we have seen, in its rulers and their successors; and the body of believers was appointed to be gathered around them as a nucleus, as a centre of life and action; and in their hands the ordinances of life were deposited. On the other hand, no man doubts that national identity remains under whatever changes either in the form or in the principles of government; and the obligations incumbent upon a people, and the rights which they may claim, survive alike the most violent and the most fundamental revolutions. For example, who can doubt that the national identity of the French people remained unimpaired while the sovereign power was transferred, however illegally, from the Merovingian to the Carlovingian line, and again from this to the Capetian dynasty? Or while, in later times, the government was usurped by the Republic of 1793, and transferred to the Emperor Napoleon, and again restored to the Bourbons, and again made over, lastly, to the Orleans branch of the Bourbon family in 1830? We have not now to inquire whether these changes in the succession, or in the nature of the provisions for discharging the great functions of civil government, are advantageous or the reverse, but to observe that, indisputably, under each and all of them the French nation has never ceased to exist, and has not, in passing from any preceding to the succeeding form, either resigned its claims or escaped its duties, the joint marks of its continued identity. Nor has the internal relation of

subject to governor been changed as respects its essential and moral obligations, although, of course, where revolutions occur, there are always accompanying difficulties in their application to practice. And even while contending for the Divine right of civil government, we may still allow that national identity in no way depends upon its unbroken continuity or its derivation.

29. But the essential distinctions between religious and political society remove any appearances of paradox from the juxtaposition of these assertions. First, as respects directly Divine authority, the sanction which Scripture affords to civil government is general, and not determined even to any particular form of it, much less to any personal succession. Further, it was given at a time when the profligacy of the emperors of Rome, and the irregularities of their respective titles, put out of the question what might be due either to high personal character, or to long prescription, or to the general choice or consent, and prove that the injunctions of the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul must be referred by the individual Christian to government at large. But with respect to the Church, the very opposite argument is maintained, namely, that Scripture does indicate a body of men to whom the functions of ecclesiastical government were committed, and a law of succession whereby their office was to be propagated, and whereby the obligations as well as the privileges of the society which they had formed were to be continued.

30. But as it respects the intrinsic reason of the case, the essential and original ideas, the *grundbegriffe* of the Church and of the State, will at once exhibit the respective adaptation of each to different laws of succession. The immediate purpose of the Church is to convey from God to man those heaven-descending influences of the Holy Ghost, whereby his salvation is to be wrought, as well as "to be the instrument of offering up to God the service of His reasonable creatures;" and all men, considered as members of the Church, are directly organs (so far as they live according to that capacity) actuated by the Redeemer himself, who is potentially the doer of their acts, for the purposes of sustaining and of accomplishing His kingdom. But the State is a part of the general secular life in which we have been placed for the ends of our general discipline, in which there are no original, special, covenanted influences from God; where we are under the sway of His ordinary Providence, and all our acts receive His blessing, or otherwise, simply according to their character in the way of natural consequence. That preternatural operation, that subtle but powerful touch whereby the will is renovated, distinguished as these are so broadly and essentially from every other, requires a distinct vehicle, a mode of conveyance which both befits, and witnesses to a direct derivation from God.

31. On this account it is required* among us, that

* Articles of the Church of England, Art. VI.

nothing shall be held fundamental in religion except what is directly revealed by God; and the doctrines of the Church are thus distinguished from the statutes of the land by their positively and expressly Divine original: and as doctrines coming from God must thus be conveyed to us in a manner which attests and assures their divine original, it is also needful by parity of reason, that those divine influences, which are likewise essential and vital parts of the Christian covenant, and which are derived absolutely and exclusively from a heavenly source, should be conveyed to us from that source by a distinct channel, separate from all machinery that is of human invention and is intended for earthly purposes. The life of the Church depends upon ordinances, and those ordinances have been committed by the Redeemer to certain persons for transmission: the life of the State is sustained by natural and not by preternatural influences, and the government of the State is therefore tied to no such conditions: in a word, we are citizens by nature, we are Christians only by grace; and as the law of nature, however illuminated by revelation, is the basis of civil polity, so the law of grace and the stipulations under which grace is promised, must be supreme in determining our position as members of the Church. We must be content to abandon Abana and Pharpar, and to wash in Jordan and be clean.

32. Arguments, then, which are used against any Divine right of civil succession in a particular line, will have no force against succession in the religious

society of the Church, inasmuch as it is easy to recognise a natural propriety in the institution by Divine authority of a government for a society formed under the most express dictates of that authority. To the peculiar form, indeed, of the Jewish state, at some of its epochs more especially, we may find an analogy in the Church; but in such cases as the accessions of Saul and of David to the throne, the very answer that is made to bar any argument which might be drawn thence in favour of royalty in general, will show how reasonable is the claim of a Divine authority for the ministerial office in the Church. That answer is, that the Jewish nation derived its social compact from God and a Divine revelation for a religious purpose. Be it so—here is the parallel case: a society essentially religious—whose alpha and omega are to be found in religion—was it strange that God, having appointed a law, should also appoint a permanent living government for this society? Would it not rather have been strange if in a case where it was to work for purposes alien to our corrupt nature, He had left it without visible organs? Saul was but the complement of a previous organisation: from the first God had set spiritual rulers over his people, who succeeded by transmission and ruled by commission. Such were the securities taken for the preservation even of the introductory system until its time should be accomplished. Would slighter means be employed to ensure the permanency of that loftier scheme which it foreran?

33. If it be rejoined, why then did not God also hedge about Christians in seclusion from the body of mankind, and enjoin to them institutions tending to restrict free intercourse with others, as He did in the case of the Jews? The reply is obviously this, that such a course would have been incompatible with the broad and professed purpose of the new dispensation, which was to extend the blessing of Abraham to all his spiritual children of all nations:* "he shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth." Thus we have the most obvious, the most imperative reason for the alteration in the ceremonial laws and institutions which separated the Jews from the world; and accordingly we find the difference declared in Scripture, and those institutions announced to have lost their binding force; but there is no such reason affecting the institution of the ministry to induce us to expect such an alteration, and no such declaration that it has taken place. Or if again it be objected that the same argument as is here drawn from the fact that the Jewish priests and prophets were such by Divine commission alone, would lead us to expect a similar minuteness of ceremonial practices to have been ordained for Christians as was ordained for Jews: again, the reply is clear; these minutenesses were of a tendency comparatively carnal; they savoured of bondage, not of freedom; of the letter, not of the spirit; but no such observation applies to the doctrine of ministerial succession.

* Ps. lxxii. 8.

34. Now in the first place, after this statement, let it be observed, that the greatest misapprehensions commonly prevail respecting the question of apostolical succession in the Church. It is not so much any erroneous conclusion upon its merits which we have to lament, as an almost entire blindness to the matter really at issue. With some, it is regarded as a subject which can possess no interest except in the eyes of those who apply to the study of theology in the spirit of a dry and barren antiquarianism. Others consider that the doctrine of succession in the ministry is at best merely analogous to that which taught the divine right of regal succession in families, and limited absolutely in favour of a particular line both the authority to govern, and the obligation to obey. A third class see in it nothing but a germ of portentous consequences which have been drawn from it by the precipitancy, or the uncharitableness, of some among those who may either have supported or opposed it.

35. The discussion is susceptible of a division into two parts, which may be attended with great advantage. The first and the greatest question is this: whether, according to the ordinances of Christ, there be any title to the ministry of which we are warranted absolutely to affirm the validity, except such as has descended from His apostles by personal transmission? In which let it be observed the question is not necessarily touched, whether perversion of doctrine is compatible with the continuance of such validity. The second question is one which, however important, is

yet subordinate to the first. It is the question, who are the actual persons, or what the existing classes, now in possession of such a title and of the power of transmission? The first of these relates to apostolical, the latter to episcopal succession. Enough has now been said of the former in an historical sense: but it has other aspects.

36. With respect to the inquiry into succession from the apostles in general, it would indeed be difficult to overrate either its ethical or its theological importance. According as it is answered in the affirmative or the negative, will a depressed or an elevated standard of Christianity be adopted, to which in the long run the course of daily practice will likewise conform. If there be a Divine commission, not a figurative but an actual, not a supposed but an attested commission, involved in the true idea of the Christian ministry, then we have a way opened for us, naturally and readily to believe, that the gifts and graces, which belong to the Author of that commission, are indeed closely attached to its legitimate exercise. Then we have a full and adequate representation of the religious dispensation under which we live, as a system of powerful influences emanating altogether from God, and operating upon us as their necessitous recipients: and that relation between Him and ourselves, which we must correctly apprehend in order to perceive the adaptation of the Christian doctrines to their purposes, is rightly established in the ideas of His unbounded might and bounty on the one hand, and of our absolute weakness

and need on the other—of Him as the universal Giver, and of us as receivers qualified by necessity alone.

37. But if the Christian society, in which we live, may be fitly and scripturally governed by men whom we ourselves appoint to offices which we ourselves define, then the idea of the gospel as a dispensation coming from God to us is contradicted and reversed; and we are exhibited as the framers of a religious system, as bestowing on God that which He has bestowed on us; our will is assumed as the origin from which it proceeds, and our understanding, by sure if not immediate consequence, comes to be the measure of the doctrines which it propounds. If any man, or any number or body of men, may assume to themselves the ordinary ministry of the Church, then how am I, the private person, to be persuaded that this is really a spiritual dispensation in which all ultimate effect depends upon the unseen working of the Holy Ghost, while I see the administration of the ordinances to which His most special and assured working is attached, not regulated by any Divine law, not fenced off from common contact, but at the mercy and the pleasure either of every private man according to his option, or his imagination, or his persuasion (for all are in the end equivalent), or, what is in principle no better, of some self-constituted body, more imposing to the eye of flesh, but not one whit better supplied with authority from the Head and Ruler of the Church? Where, it may be asked, is the right of any private Christian to administer sacraments? or of any num-

ber of private Christians, either to do, or to authorise the doing, of such an act? or of any civil power? If such a right be assumed by the Christian, why need it be limited to Christians? Why may not the Pagan baptize himself? I do not mean that one case of excess is not more outrageous than another, but this,—that when we leave the record of scriptural authority, realised in the practice of the Church, we shall strive in vain to limit the abuse, the profanation, for whose first commencements we shall have become responsible, and whose extreme degrees are too sure to follow.

38. Thus much has been stated by way of introduction and warrant to the propositions which may now be submitted, namely, that, inasmuch as the means of our salvation proceed not from ourselves but from God, and as the due reception of the Christian Sacraments is "generally necessary" to its attainment, it is a matter of the deepest practical concern to us to enjoy their administration in the manner in which God appointed it to be. And that, inasmuch as it appears from Scripture that this function has been committed to certain persons by the Redeemer, and by them to certain others, with the charge for their perpetual maintenance and celebration, it is to us nothing less than a part of our religious obligation, to seek the Sacraments at the hands of those who have been thus traditionally empowered to deliver them in their integrity, that is, with the assurance of that spiritual blessing which, although it may be obstructed by our disqualifications in its passage to our souls, forms the

inward and chief portion of those solemn rites. The argument from the commission to preach and instruct, and from the power of the keys, is nearly parallel, and is corroborative of that from the authority requisite for the right administration of Sacraments.

39. The right to administer Sacraments, and to teach as an ambassador of Christ, depends upon the validity of the ordination which has been received by the claimant of that right. What, therefore, men generally require in point of practice is, that they should receive the faith and its ordinances from persons thus rightly commissioned; and what is necessary to us as inquirers in point of truth is, that we should know, if the knowledge may be had, who those persons are. The Church of England, in conformity with ancient doctrine, allows those orders, and those alone, which are received through the episcopal succession; and Hooker, who has ever been considered as among the most moderate as well as able defenders of her doctrines, allows but of two cases in which the ministry can be lawful without them—the case of miraculous gifts, and the case of absolute necessity, on which last he seems to rest the ministrations of the continental reformers.* Some in the Church of Rome teach, that no orders are valid except those which are conferred in the Roman communion. A school which originated in the seventeenth century has taught that the succession resided essentially in the ministry at large—a principle which admitted of the various opi-

* Eccl. Pol., vii. 14.

nions either that episcopacy was a corruption; or that it was an institution of later date than the apostolic era, generally preferable on grounds of expediency, venerable for age, and the special and most effective means of upholding unity in the Church; or even that it was an apostolical but disciplinary institution, and capable of being altered by the Church upon sufficient cause shown. Lastly, it has been held by some persons, as apparently by Knox,* that the ultimate authority of ordination was in the body of baptized and believing persons—an opinion quite irreconcilable with what has been already advanced from Scripture, and one therefore of which it is unnecessary here to take further notice. It would be equally beside my purpose to enter into the controversy between the Church of England and the Church of Rome upon succession, particularly because the arguments advanced by the latter have scarcely the shadow of an appeal to Scripture, and because many members of the papal communion have maintained the validity of Anglican orders. The question more pressing in practice is that which regards the exclusion by the Church in our country of all other but episcopal ordination; because such of those bodies who have joined her in protesting against the Roman abuses as have not, like her, remained in the line of the episcopal succession, accuse her in this respect of a narrow and intolerant spirit.

* MacCrie's Life of Knox, i. p. 57. Neal, i. ch. vi. (1575) mentions a body of sixty clergymen in the eastern parts of England who professed a similar tenet.

40. To throw aside all matters not substantially affecting the point at issue, I would say that by the office of a bishop is here meant that which, in the language of Hooker,* "excelled in latitude of power of order," having, which none without it have, "the power to give the power of order unto others," and "of ordaining both deacons and presbyters;" and which excelled likewise "in that kind of power which belongeth unto jurisdiction." Or as in another passage,† "a bishop is a minister of God," distinguished from presbyters by "a further power to ordain ecclesiastical persons, and a power of chiefty in government over presbyters as well as laymen."

41. Of such a power it is conceived that there are abundant traces in the New Testament, although they are in little or no connection with the name of bishop. As first, it is allowed that much more than the essential power of bishops was exercised by the apostles at large; but after this has been granted, room is still left, as we have seen, for further questions, and these have been raised, partly as concerning the transmission, and partly as concerning the localisation, of this power. The ecclesiastical officers of whom we hear most in the New Testament are those who derived the name of "elders" from the analogous function in the synagogue, and who also bore that of "bishops" in respect of their overseeing the members of the Church. They acted locally in a college, under the government

* Eccl. Pol., vii. 6. † Ib., vii. 2.

of the apostles, who passed freely from place to place as occasion might require.

42. But we hear of James, the Lord's brother or relative, (whom the most ancient ecclesiastical history declares to have been bishop of Jerusalem, and) whom we find in Scripture exercising the functions of a locally fixed ecclesiastical superior.

When * St. Peter was delivered from prison and came to the house of Mary, the mother of John or Mark, he said, "Go, show these things unto James, and to the brethren."

When † Paul and Barnabas had delivered their message to the council at Jerusalem, and after St. Peter had given his opinion, James rose up and delivered his sentence, which was subsequently embodied in a decree.

When ‡ St. Paul came to Jerusalem "to be bound," on the day after his arrival he "went in" "unto James, and all the elders were present." There he gave an account of his ministry, and received counsel as to his conduct.

If St. James was one of the twelve, we have in him a scriptural example of locally limited or diocesan authority over a college of presbyters. If he were not an apostle, then his case goes to prove that provision had already begun to be made for permanently supplying their places.

43. Next, Scripture proves to us that Timothy and

* Acts xii. 17. † Ibid. xv. 6—29. ‡ Ibid. xxi. 17, 18.

Titus were appointed by St. Paul to exercise in Ephesus and Crete episcopal powers, as delegates of the apostle, namely, the power of order* and the power of jurisdiction;† with other functions which need not now be more peculiarly noticed. It likewise appears that Timothy had been specially ordained to his function by the hands of St. Paul, for he is instructed thus: "Stir up the gift of God which is in thee, *by* the putting on of my hands."‡ Here the same gift is evidently spoken of which is also said to have been conferred "by prophecy, (not by, but) *with* the laying on of the hands of the presbytery."§ There is an easy and natural manner of reconciling these two passages, by the interpretation, namely, that St. Paul, as chief of the presbytery, had ordained Timothy, inasmuch as we have clear scriptural examples recorded, in which we find an apostle or chief acting together with the ecclesiastical college.‖ We cannot say that he and Titus are therefore demonstrated to have been bishops, in the proper sense, of those places respectively; and it appears that both of them, after being settled there, were called away¶ (for what period does not appear) by St. Paul, whose history is not carried by the sacred volume down to the last acts of his life. But ecclesiastical history, with one voice, records that Timothy and Titus became the first bishops of Ephesus and Crete.

* 1 Tim. iii. 1; Tit. i. 5. † 1 Tim, i. 3; v. 1; Tit. ii. 2.
‡ 2 Tim. i. 6. § 1 Tim. iv. 14. ‖ Acts xx. 17; xxi. 18.
¶ 2 Tim. iv. 9, 11, 21; Tit. iii. 12.

44. Further, we read in the Apocalypse that the seven epistles were directed to the angels of the seven churches. The name angel, messenger, bears a remarkable analogy to the name apostle, which signifies one sent. And it is stated, with every appearance of probability, that those chief ministers on whom the apostolic functions of government devolved were unwilling to arrogate to themselves a name which had been associated with miraculous powers so eminent, and with plenary inspiration. What could be more appropriate, under this supposition, than the designation of angels?* It implied most clearly their character, as persons whose functions were derived from God, and not from those among and upon whom they were to be performed; and at the same time it marked, by the change of title, that they did not claim in all things to represent the apostles. Now it is clear that these angels are not figurative persons; because,† while the seven churches are represented by seven candlesticks, the seven angels are similarly represented by seven stars; and as the churches were real and historical, so must the angels have been. And it is the opinion, I believe, of the most learned men of the present day, that the Apocalypse was written as early as A.D. 67 or 68.

45. Other persons are noticed in Scripture of whom it appears either certain or probable, that they exer-

* On the "angels," see Hoadly's Defence of Episcopal Ordination, chap. i. (ii.) pp. 77, 78.

† Rev. i. 20.

cised the office of apostolic delegates, as Silvanus,* Mark,† Clement,‡ Epaphras,§ Epaphroditus.‖ The latter is designated by St. Paul in writing to the Philippians, as their Ἀπόστολος.

46. The entire historical evidence of the episcopal succession may be represented as summed up under the following heads:—I. The scriptural records already noticed. II. The catalogues of the successions of bishops in the various sees, tracing them, as Tertullian ¶ says, in every case, to one either of the apostles or of those who had actually known and permanently continued with the apostles. And these successions it was the very purpose of Eusebius,** in his History of the Church, as he expressly informs us, to record. Irenæus in like manner declares, that the Catholics had it in their power to enumerate those who had been made bishops by the apostles in the several sees. This kind of evidence will appear to be of very great force, if we remember how well known and established a practice it was, in ancient times, to record the history of societies by the successions of their rulers, as among the Jews by their high priests; among the Romans by their consuls or military tribunes, and by their subsequent rulers, the emperors, as consuls; at Sparta, by the ephors; at Athens, by the archons; at Argos, by the priestesses of the Temple of Juno.†† III. The actual development of the state of the Church, under

* 1 Th. i. 1; 2 Th. i. 1; 1 Pet. v. 12. † Col. iv. 10; 1 Pet. v. 13.
‡ Phil. iv. 3. § Col. i. 7; iv. 12, 13. ‖ Phil. ii. 25.
¶ De præscr. Adv. hær. c. 32. ** Euseb. Præf.
†† Thuc. iv. 133.

a thorough episcopal organisation, as it is exhibited in the epistles of Ignatius, at the commencement of the second century.* IV. The historical notices of Hegesippus who lived in the middle of the second century, and of whose work only fragments have been preserved by Eusebius. And perhaps, as Irenæus had in his youth known Polycarp the disciple of St. John, his declarations may likewise be considered as historical. V. The strong corroborative evidence afforded by the various heretical and seceding bodies of the second and third century, as the Ebionites† and the followers of Novatian, who, though apart from and hostile to the Church, nevertheless retained the form of the episcopate as necessary to support their claims to share or possess the title of the Church. VI. The traditional testimonies of the Fathers at large, which are chiefly important as witnessing to the state of things each in their own time, and by reason of their general concurrence.

47. If this were the place for entering into the discussion, I apprehend it would not be found difficult to show that the arguments which have been raised by ‡ Chillingworth and others, from the doctrine of chances, against the certainty of the apostolical transmission of ministerial power, are open to two fatal objections. Firstly, If the succession be itself desirable, then we are bound to adhere to the least improbable

* On the genuineness of these records, see Rothe, Anfänge der Christlichen Kirche, vol. i. Beilage.

† Rothe, vol. i. § 50.

‡ Chillingworth's Religion of Protestants, ch. ii. § 67.

means of securing it, which is certainly that of episcopal ordination, even although it were true that the chances (to speak mathematically) were upon the whole against the hypothesis of its continuity. Secondly, That the probability of a flaw affecting the present orders of the clergy is indefinitely minute; and is not increased but diminished at each new transmission of the ordaining power.

48. Upon any supposition, a fault in the ordination of presbyters takes no effect beyond the lives of those presbyters. According to the rules of the Church, from the council of Nice, or even from an earlier period, a bishop is to be consecrated by three bishops; a regulation itself evincing the extreme care and anxiety of the Church in this matter, inasmuch as any one bishop has, it seems, essentially the power required. But one of the useful effects of this wise precaution is to multiply to the third degree the chances in favour of continuity. If it be admitted that regular consecration was the general practice, but only insinuated that there may have been here and there an exception through neglect, say, for example, one in 500, for argument's sake let us grant so much; upon this showing the chances for the validity of the consecration of every one of the three officiating bishops, in a given case, are :: 500 : 1. For the validity of those of two out of the three, :: $500 \times 500 = 25{,}000 : 1$. For the validity of some one out of the three, :: $500 \times 25{,}000 = 12{,}500{,}000 : 1$. If, however, this be not enough, let us pursue the numerical argument one step farther, and, instead of taking the original chances at one in

500, let us reduce them lower than perhaps any adversary would demand; let us place them at one in 20. On this extravagant allowance, the chances in favour of the validity of the consecration of a bishop who receives his commission from three of the order are only $20 \times 20 \times 20 = 8000 : 1$. But his own invalid consecration only affects his own acts, and not the general line of the succession, unless, when he proceeds to consecrate a new brother, both his coadjutors in the act are under the same incapacity with himself, and the chances, mathematically computed, against this contingency, are as the third power of 8000, or as 512,000,000,000, are to unity. But enough of this rather unworthy discussion, which can only justify the attention already given it from the fact that men of note and name have been misled by the fallacy in question.

49. Again, with respect to the darkness of the middle ages, I apprehend that the high and even superstitious reverence then paid to the office of the priesthood tells positively and most strongly in favour of the succession, because it thus becomes so much the more highly improbable that forms so sacred should have been neglected, that unauthorised intrusion should have been either permitted or attempted. The canons both of the ancient and the modern Church join their testimony to the emphatic evidence of the rule of conscseration by three, to show the extreme care always bestowed on the arrangements for ensuring the regularity of the succession.* I admit that they also show

* See in Johnson's Ecclesiastical Canons; Wulfred, No. 5, A.D. 816;

the considerable hazards and miscarriages to which in particular cases it was exposed : but I contend that the general result is all that, in a case of historical testimony, we are accustomed or entitled to require.

50. No real difficulty of a serious kind is created by the changes in the use of the term ἐπίσκοπος, except upon a first view of the subject. The historical inquirer must endeavour to guard himself as much as possible against premature reliance upon mere identity of appellation, and must seek rather to discern things themselves than the names by which they are called, until he arrives at the period where the consistency of their application admonishes him that they may be implicitly followed. It may be freely admitted, for argument's sake, that the term ἐπίσκοπος in the New Testament does not denote one holding a distinct ecclesiastical office. Now the term πρεσβύτερος itself underwent quite as great changes as the sister-name ἐπίσκοπος. It appears first to have signified age alone, then the ministerial office held by virtue of age, then the ministerial office independently of age. Further, there is evidence that the Latin term corresponding to its original purport (*seniores*), was applied in Africa, at the time of Cyprian, to lay officers in the Church ; and still more, the council of Carthage, as late as A.D. 390, used another synonymous expression, *majores natu*, as equivalent to *episcopi*, at a period when no man doubts that episcopacy was universal in the Church.*

51. Rothe, a German writer of great learning and

Otho, No. 6, A.D. 1237; Arundel, No. 9, A.D. 1408. See also Brit. Mag. (1840), p. 51.

* Rothe, i. § 42.

power, to whose researches I am deeply indebted, has beautifully developed the relation of the early Christian societies to the Jewish polity, and has shown that an absolute Church-organisation, while the ancient system yet remained, was not only unnecessary but would have been unnatural, perhaps impossible. The subject is one far too extensive for any attempt at its development here; but it may simply be observed that the Jewish ecclesiastical system was not abolished by our Lord or his apostles; that these in their preaching addressed the Jews as brethren already under the covenant of God, and exhorted them collectively, rather to a development of their own spiritual relation to God as children of Abraham, and within the scope of the original promise to that patriarch, than to the adoption of a new one; that they do not announce in their addresses even their own official capacity, but appear as witnesses to facts; that the organisation of the synagogue might have proved quite compatible with the purposes of the Church, as indeed it was imitated in the first Christian societies; and lastly, that it is easy to perceive what additional jealousies and obstructions they would have encountered, if they had publicly preached to the Jews a rival polity together with a new doctrine.

52. The apostles themselves appear to have fulfilled originally the entire functions of the ministry with relation both to spiritual and also to the accessory temporal affairs. When these began to press too heavily, they appointed deacons to replace and relieve them. We do not yet, be it observed, hear of any pres-

byterate; but the college of apostles remained at Jerusalem, and they went forth thence from time to time, as occasion might serve (Acts viii. 14; ix. 32). In the course of time we find bodies of elders established, as in Jerusalem (Acts ix. 30; xv. 4, 16, 23), and in Ephesus (Acts xx. 17); and permanent provision for their continuance in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus. We do not yet find the episcopate, properly so called. The presbyterate preceded the episcopate, as the diaconate preceded the presbyterate. But when the further multiplication of the Churches was such that the apostles could no longer personally discharge the functions even of government in them all, then we find them beginning to establish persons, as Timothy and Titus, who should discharge these functions too in their stead, in this manner preparing gradually, as the exigencies arose, for the continuance of their own essential powers, after their personal removal from the earth to their reward.

53. Thus the three orders were originally enveloped together in the persons of the apostles, and they shed, as it were, each in succession, according to the gradual pressure of their labours in the Gospel; so that the one last in rank was first in time; and the one first in rank, and on which the others hang, last in time. And it may be noticed as a collateral advantage attending this natural genesis of the Christian ministry, that by means of it men were trained under the eye of the apostles (Timothy, Titus, Clement, Ignatius, Polycarp) to exercise the function of supreme government

in the Church, instead of being appointed to it without previous experience, as would have been the case if the order had been reversed.

54. Nothing, I may add, can be more contrary to reason than to complain because Scripture does not convey to us a full account of the establishment of the order of bishops. And this not simply because the notices which it does furnish are entirely analogous to the general character of the New Testament in its historical bearings, which is not systematic, but occasional; but further and more especially, because to expect from Scripture a full account of the establishment of an order, whose function it was to replace the apostles, is to anticipate what is absolutely precluded by the nature of the case, inasmuch as Scripture only records what took place during the lifetime of the apostles, mentioning the death of one alone,* and in no other case carrying down the account of their proceedings to the conclusion of their ministry or life.†

55. Of those who rely upon the very superficial notion that Christ did not institute any determinate form of government in His Church, let it be asked

* Acts xii. 2.

† See a remarkable passage in a note to Rothe's "Anfange der Christlichen Kirche," § 48, vol. 1. p. 506. He there says it is difficult to conceive why Catholic writers should have been at pains to discover actual bishops, in the determinate sense of the term, in the historical records of the New Testament, inasmuch as it was totally unnecessary, from their accurate view of the episcopate, to their argument. For if the episcopate be a real continuance of the apostolate, how should we find it existing while the apostles themselves held the reins of ecclesiastical administration? And to this effect he quotes Gabler, both, like himself, a non-episcopal, and, I believe, even an anti-episcopal writer.

that they should inquire of themselves what in truth is meant by this allegation; and whether it can with justice import more than this, that He did not give any abstract and theoretical statement of the form of government appointed in the Church any full verbal expression of its conditions. But this, which may be granted to be true, is very far indeed from determining the proposition that no such form was appointed. Let us look back to the Jewish dispensation. I apprehend no one will dispute, that a form of government was then Divinely instituted. And yet even there we should scarcely find any abstract scheme of an ecclesiastical constitution. We find what is quite sufficient—the appointment of certain persons to certain functions, with power to transmit their offices. And this is as much the establishment of a form of government, although the form itself be unwritten, as if the form had been written. Just so in the New Testament our Lord appointed certain persons to certain functions, with the same power of transmission. The persons were the apostles, the functions comprised the government of the Church in general, as well as the temporary endowments of inspiration and of miraculous gifts. The power of transmission is ascertained by the fact of transmission.

56. *Now the record of the circumstances is in such

* Compare the following passage from William Law:—"Is it needful for the Scriptures to tell us that, if we take our Bible from any false copy, it is not the Word of God? Why then need they tell us that, if we are ordained by usurping false pretenders to ordination, not de-

a case equivalent to any statement of principles, however formal and precise. The rights of civil sovereignty and of hereditary succession may be, and often have been, conveyed from generation to generation under an established yet unwritten constitution. But even such an illustration is very inadequate; because succession by derivation is not necessarily implied in such a case. In the case of the Church it has been contended that the fact of such succession is historically established; and the argument now raised is, that a fact of this nature is equivalent to the most definite and exclusive statement. The Redeemer had the absolute right of sovereignty in His Church, and no one could have it but from Him. Now it is surely quite immaterial whether the powers of government were derived under a written document, as they are in some civil constitutions, or by command orally conveyed. In the former sense, the statement of the form of Church government was needless; in the latter, it has been given. Nothing can be more definite than the commissions imparted to the apostles. Nothing can be more exclusive; it would have been

riving their authority to that end from the apostles, we are no priests? Does not the thing itself speak as plain in one case as in the other? The Scriptures are only of use to us as they are the Word of God; we cannot have this Word of God, which was written so many years ago, unless we receive it from authentic copies and manuscripts. The clergy have their commission from the Holy Ghost; the power of conferring this commission of the Holy Ghost was left with the apostles; therefore the present clergy cannot have the same commission, or call, but from an order of men who have successively conveyed this power from the apostles to the present time."—Law's Second Letter to Hoadly, p. 31.

as irrelevant to specify that the commission given only to them was not possessed by others, as if, when Alexander gave his ring to Perdiccas, the record of the fact had stated not only that he gave it to this general, but also that he did not give it to Antigonus, nor to Seleucus, nor to Antipater, nor to Ptolemy. And particularly if we consider the relation of the infant Christian body to the Jewish polity—an investigation which is too extensive for this place—we may be inclined to think that any more formal statement, or the delivery of a written constitution instead of a personal commission, would have embarrassed and impeded the progress, and greatly obscured the principles and meaning of the new dispensation.

57. Now the primary question to be determined with respect to the validity of the Christian ministry is one of fact; to whom have its powers been Divinely committed? It is in vain that we should say the episcopate implies the exclusive power of order, if it can be shown on the other hand that that power has been actually transmitted to any persons who are not bishops. And so on the other hand it is equally nugatory to say the presbyterate implies a joint power of order, unless it can be shown that some persons who are simply presbyters have received it. The office is in each case no more than the aggregate and combined representation of the powers conferred in it. But to call a man a bishop, or to call a man a presbyter, carries no effect. The names are material and significant only as descriptive of persons to whom certain

powers have been committed. When our Lord called St. Peter and the rest, He did not say "Be an Apostle," but "Follow me;" and then gave certain gifts and a commission, in virtue of which those who held it were called apostles. The name of the office was posterior to its substance, though it now serves to explain the substance.

58. An important question hereupon arises. Suppose it could be shown that in the first ages of the Church presbyters had received and actually exercised a power of ordination. Suppose the theory could be demonstrated which teaches that the early presbyters resigned and made over their share in that function to chief presbyters, or bishops. Suppose we should receive as historical and true all the statements of Jerome, and as accurate that misinterpretation of one of them, according to which it imports, that the presbyters of Alexandria always, up to a certain period, *made* their bishop. Still, by the very hypothesis,* the fact remains, that the powers once enjoyed were actually surrendered by those who held them, and that they passed into the hands of the bishops, who thus alone could have retained the function of transmitting them. It may be said, the original possessors might have resumed them. Even this may, for argument's sake, be granted. But it is undisputed, that a period sooner or later came, when all the presbyters that ever (under the present supposition) had possessed them

* This is well argued by Bishop Hoadly: "Brief Defence of Episcopal Ordination," ch. ii.

were defunct. Is it not a necessary consequence that existing presbyters cannot possibly have them by the method of derivation and succession? What may be probably argued in cases of absolute necessity is a very different consideration; but I submit that whatever assumption may be made with respect to the powers of the original presbyters, it is null and void as applied to those who, if they have never received, of course cannot possess, the power of ordination. That there might have been a lawful commission by presbyters—that there might have been a presbyterial apostolical succession, is readily to be admitted; but we want the historical evidence that there is one.

59. Now here is a homely way of stating the question: suppose to a Presbyterian, to such a one as admits the apostolical succession, but holds it to be in the line of the presbyterate—"You agree that no one is to a certainty a lawful minister without a commission derived from the apostles. To whom then did the apostles make over the power of order?" He will say, to colleges of presbyters. "And to whom did those colleges of presbyters, who had thus received it personally, in their turn deliver it?" In some cases, he will reply, to bishops or arch-presbyters; in some, to other presbyters: but he will certainly allow that, at some given period in the history of the Church—let him take the latest which there is even a shred of evidence to imply, and say in the fourth or even the fifth century—every presbyterial college existing came to be composed of men to whom no independent power of order had been given as a part of their commission;

and every individual presbyter was thus void of such a power. If they did not then possess it, they could not convey it. And, as I apprehend, no historical doubt has ever been expressed, or seriously entertained, that for a thousand years (I might reasonably name a longer period) before the time of the reformers, no presbyter had received or exercised the independent power of order; or, if there were any, that the Protestant bodies separated from the Church in this country do not hold from them. In truth, among ourselves, beyond all doubt, bishops only were known to have received it, and bishops only could be known to give it. The gap of one generation would have been as fatal as of many. And the subsequent lapse of a thousand years can do nothing to supply that void. Prescription and use, which cannot increase by one jot the essential powers of the Church, cannot avail, where they are absent, to fill their place.

60. It must be sufficiently clear, from what has been said, that those persons entirely misapprehend the nature of the question at issue who regard it as analogous to the controversy between the respective partisans of the different forms of civil government. The relation of our Episcopacy to Presbyterianism or Independency is not that of a monarchical to an oligarchical or a democratic form of political government. The sacredness of the authority of government is a principle binding on the conscience of the subject, whatever be its form; and the point abstractedly at issue is simply this—whether its powers are most naturally and most beneficially reposed in the hands of one,

of several, or of many. Now, supposing that a part of the Independent denomination were to determine on having an episcopal government, were to choose bishops, and commit to them the discharge of the very same functions as belong to our own; the difference between them, on the one hand, and the original Independents on the other, would be analogous to that just stated in political constitutions. The Wesleyan Methodists of America, a large and I believe most respectable body, have done this very thing, and are called Episcopal Methodists: but no one, however desirous for the restoration of a real Church communion with them, could flatter himself that they had thereby satisfied its necessary conditions.

61. I next proceed to indicate the testimony which the Church of England affords us with relation to the subject of the conditions of a valid and regular ministry, and which is drawn, in amount amply sufficient to bear out the principles which are here advocated, from her articles and ordinal. First, from Art. xix.—'Of the Church:'—"The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure word of God is preached, and the Sacraments be duly ministered according to Christ's ordinance in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same." Art. xxiii.—'Of Ministering in the Congregation:'—"It is not lawful for any man to take upon him the office of public preaching, or ministering the Sacraments in the congregation, before he be lawfully called and sent to execute the same. And those we ought to judge lawfully called and sent which be chosen and

called to this work by men who have public authority given unto them in the congregation to call and send ministers into the Lord's vineyard." But who are these men? Turn now to the Preface of the 'Office for Ordination:'*—"No man shall be accounted or taken to be a lawful bishop, priest, or deacon in the United Church of England and Ireland, or suffered to execute any of the said functions, except he be called, tried, examined, and admitted thereunto according to the form hereafter following, or hath had formerly episcopal consecration or ordination." Surely the mind of the Church is hereby declared with sufficient clearness. It is almost unnecessary to refer to Art. xxxvi.—'Of Consecration of Bishops and Ministers;' which runs as follows:—"The book of consecration of archbishops and bishops, and ordering of priests and deacons, lately set forth in the time of Edward VI., and confirmed at the same time by authority of parliament, doth contain all things necessary to such consecration and ordering: neither hath it anything that of itself is superstitious and ungodly. And therefore whosoever are consecrated or ordered according to the rites of that book, since the second year of the forenamed King Edward unto this time, or hereafter shall be consecrated or ordered according to the same rites, we decree all such to be rightly, orderly, and lawfully consecrated and ordered." The office remains at present essentially unaltered: and it is very remarkable that this alone, of all the offices of the Church, has been selected for special recognition in the Articles—

* See Appendix A.

a fact which may be with justice understood as indicating on the part of our leading reformers the greatest anxiety to guard the doctrine and practice of apostolical succession, even at a time when they were naturally and most properly desirous to cultivate the attachment of so many excellent ministers and men in other countries, who were, by no fault of their own, compelled to dispense with the benefits and consolations so providentially preserved to this nation.

62. Although the light of any merely individual testimony must seem pale beside that of these authoritative declarations, I cannot but advert to the circumstance that even Bishop Hoadly, the fatally notorious advocate of low doctrine, with respect not only to the Church and the Sacraments, but also to other articles of the Christian faith, published, nevertheless, a 'Brief Defence of Episcopal Ordination;'* in which he contends, with great clearness and ability, both from Scripture and from ecclesiastical history, in favour of the exclusive right of bishops to direct the matter of ordination; and this, although, already under the influence of his peculiar tendencies, he was far from recognising the real meaning of those solemn terms in which the ordinal of the Church confers the sacred office. Such testimony from such a person is surely of the greatest force, both in support of the general argument, and in proof that the mind of the Church of England upon the subject was both unequivocally expressed

* London, 1707.

and thoroughly understood. As for cases which have been alleged,* in which particular members of the Church have been disposed to relax the strictness of her law, we are to remember that they refer, for the most part, to persons who had wanted episcopal ordination through necessity, and not by choice; and, secondly, that the occasional opinions of individuals, in opposition to clear testimony from the Church, and even to a practice observed by themselves, are of little weight.

63. With these witnesses then at my side, it may be allowed me to say that, in the foregoing and in the following remarks, as indeed throughout this volume, it is the farthest thing imaginable from my intention to do anything so presumptuous, and in this case so absurd on every other ground, as would be the recommendation to adopt any new, or to modify any existing, theological tenet. It has been my meaning neither to produce nor to reproduce, but simply to remind; not to remind the Church of anything, but only to remind myself and other private persons of what the Church says to us upon a question of great practical moment. The only change which I desire or anticipate is a subjective change; a fuller consciousness in my fellow-churchmen of the nature, the guarantees, and the results of those principles which we have received from our spiritual mother, and which we all hold in common: and, in following out this purpose,

* See a pleasing letter in the 'British Magazine' for November, 1839, by the Rev. J. Cumming.

I have striven rather to keep within than to exceed the full measure of the Church's teaching. This is a point upon which it is far better to be prolix, or to be wearisome by repetition, than to leave any occasion for misapprehensions.

64. And now, in a momentary retrospect, let us consider how far we have advanced in the subject, and how much of the course proposed still remains to be trodden. It has been attempted, by a rude sketch from Scripture, and by still scantier hints from primitive testimony, to exhibit authority for the doctrine of apostolical succession rather in the light of a naked rule than of a rule *motivè;* rather, to use the language of Bishop Butler, as a positive law than as a moral one. I now come to the more specific purpose of inquiring whether we do not find in this doctrine itself those beautiful adaptations to our state and necessities, and to the ends of the Gospel, as affecting human character, by which, used in due subordination to the direct authority of revelation, we may legitimately bring the argument of design to bear upon controverted questions of interpretation in theology? Let us accordingly, for a little, endeavour to consider the nature of that dispensation under which we live, and the conditions of our own human constitution, so far as is necessary to elucidate some part at least of the moral uses and advantages of the doctrine of apostolical succession.

65. There are, however, two cautions with which it is well on every occasion to guard the very outset of such a course of remark. First, that these considera-

tions are in themselves subsidiary, and should only be allowed to occupy a secondary place in the mind. If it be true that the authority of Scripture, illustrated by the testimony of Christian antiquity, affords us no evidence of any legitimate ministry except that which is derived from episcopal ordination, the simple recognition of such a fact ought to be enough to set at rest all questions of preference. If God commanded that in this channel His gifts of grace should be conveyed, we have no title to entertain the inquiry whether any other would have been more convenient. Upon the direct authority we should fix our habitual contemplations, our steady and undivided reliance. W e have no right to enter into comparisons of consequences for the purpose of showing that man's ordinance is better than God's. Nay, we have not even a right to determine which is God's ordinance from a view of such consequences. They are purely subsidiary and illustrative. But an indication of the Divine will in a particular direction at once imposes a higher and clearer obligation than any we can derive from presumed perceptions of even Christian expediency, however fitly we may be guided by such perceptions when the immediate voice of God is not articulate or audible in His revelation. And, over and above all this, those persons do injustice to the episcopal government—I had almost said, who consent to call it by this name. It is the accident of a sound Church government to be episcopal—its essence is to be apostolical. They do gross injustice to episcopal government who defend it

only or mainly by showing that it affords a convenient method of administering Church affairs; that it opens to merit the avenues of reward; or even, that it adapts the frame of the Church to the more general Divine appointments of a graduated structure for civil society. For all these reasons it is desirable and good: but its paramount claim upon us is of a different kind; and is found in the *fact* that it is the ordinance of God—that in these hands we have every reasonable evidence to show that God designed to lodge the spiritual gifts, which are His to dispose of, and without which we cannot (because we have not the will to do it) become hearty recipients of Christianity.

66. Nevertheless, as has been said, these illustrative discussions of the moral results of this or that truth have their legitimate uses with the foregoing limitations. I would hope that to point out the harmonies and the profit of God's dispensation may be an innocent and amiable task, like that which many of our countrymen have performed with great honour and advantage, namely, the study of inanimate nature as supplying proofs of the Divine benevolence and wisdom. And this consideration leads to the second prefatory caution. I do not presume to suppose myself able to exhibit any comprehensive, far less any complete, view of the religious uses of the doctrine of succession; nor hope to do more than, catching here and there some faint glimpse of light thrown upon particular modes of its operation, in some partial measure to describe them. Far less still would it be

allowable to advance any such subject-matter as belonging to the proofs of the doctrine, or as exhibiting the reasons for which God saw fit to ordain it. Doubtless, so far as the considerations, perceived retrospectively by us, are true and valid, they must have been contemplated prospectively by the Divine mind, and they may have been causally connected, therefore, with the dispensation. But when we denominate a cause or reason that which we have perceived as a beneficial consequence flowing out of some Divine arrangement, it is only by a licence of language which requires to be tempered with great sobriety of thought and to be guarded by cautious qualifications.

67. Let me first briefly allude to some of the most obvious and popular considerations. It is desirable that the ministers of religion should be separated, as far as may be, by solemn initiation, and by the indelibility of their character, from secular undertakings. It is desirable, at the same time, that religion should be effectually and closely associated with learning and civilisation; that theology in the persons of its professors should be exhibited as the heart of all genuine and permanent knowledge; should be able, while providing for its most zealous cultivation, to maintain the modest and true estimate of its value and its functions; and should likewise itself be handled as a science, not with an unbridled licence of the speculative faculty in each individual, but with a due regard to its immovable traditionary basis in Scripture. Nothing can be more disastrous than that it should be confounded with

those branches of knowledge which grow up from experiment and induction, and dwelling long in the region of an uncertainty often aggravated by the crudest dogmatism, pass through a thousand discordant phases before they are entitled to take rank as portions of the fixed patrimony of mankind. It is further desirable that a description of men should exist whose social influence is ever to be employed on the side of order, while they are bound by obligations in no degree less sacred to protest against tyranny and oppression. It is desirable that when the peaceful organisation of society is broken up there should still be found a class of persons who must, in season and out of season, be busied in peaceful and soothing offices, like those of the Christian faith, who are generally exempted from sharing in the horrors of war, and thus by standing apart from it are left free to exercise a mitigating influence upon its character, to recall, at least at intervals, the sense of things unseen, and to establish in the midst of sanguinary conflicts "the truce of God;" who, even at the times when they have been mixed up with warlike transactions, have yet, upon the whole, (with whatever painful exceptions during periods when their power has been in excess,) by keeping before the general view noble and sacred objects, laboured to restrain the guilty and terrific energy of brutal, greedy, and selfish passion. It is desirable, lastly, in times of civil order, that a body of persons should exist who may stand as general friends and counsellors in the midst of the community on behalf of all who need

their aid, who may advise in difficulties, may mediate in quarrels, may offer solace in afflictions, may stimulate and take the lead in all good works of humanity and charity for the relief of those wants and distresses of mankind which a state of peace frequently does less to remove than to conceal.

68. All these objects, it will be truly said, can never be perfectly attained by any ecclesiastical system, however excellent; and, on the other hand, will always be attained in some degree so long as any class separated for the offices of religion shall be found among men, whatever be their civil footing or their ministerial title. But the degrees of their attainment, and of the aptitude to attain them, may notwithstanding vary. Something may no doubt be done even where the ministers of religion are dependent on those over whom their function is to "have the rule,"* where they have no recognition from the civil authorities of the land, are irreconcilably divided in that which they teach, and put forward no claim to belong, by unbroken ecclesiastical descent, to the college of the apostles of Christ. But there is little question among us that more will be effected, where they are secured by a fixed provision from subserviency to their flocks, and where the acknowledgment and support of the law sets the people an example, and affords a practical explanation of their character and claims. But surely, if these civil aids can do much to promote the due

* Heb. xiii. 17.

estimation of that character, much more will it become intelligible, far less contested its title to general respect, when with one voice those who pretend to it recite the same ancient symbols and deliver the same immortal faith, when they are combined in the same body, and that body one of continuous, visible, historical existence from the time of our blessed Lord for eighteen hundred years. In short, let it be tried whether there be any one of the arguments popularly urged to show the advantage of a separate order of clergy, which does not tell with enhanced effect, when that clergy is constituted in the line of the apostolical succession. So much, then, for this class of considerations.

69. I would next take into view the natural effects of the doctrine of the apostolical succession upon the minds and characters of those who lay claim to it. I say the natural effect: for this we must distinguish from its incidental results when despotism or ignorance have deranged the equilibrium of society, and where superstition has depraved, in greater or less degrees, this in common with every other holy truth. But the fact of a blind, or even an idolatrous reverence, once paid to the priesthood and accepted by them, is no more an argument against the due, and even the full appreciation of their office, than the existence, at particular epochs, of a servile and abject submissiveness, would justify a general assault upon the temper of obedience to public law. Now the natural effect of the claim of apostolical succession is truly represented in the sayings of St. Paul, " Let a man so account of

us as of the ministers, of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God;"* "We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead;"† and in the consequences which he by inspiration drew from these principles. He felt that an office, as truly and as strictly instituted of God as the office of a judge or a magistrate is instituted by the Crown, deserved to be magnified: and that too in respect of the general character of ambassadorship from God to man, on which he mainly relies, and which it still retains, as well as on account of those temporary and peculiar ornaments which it has ceased to possess. The immediate result of a full conception of the office—was, as his Epistles so amply show, a quickened sense of his responsibilities and of his privileges; of the glory of being appointed to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; of the woe which hung over him if he failed to perform that function; the former the liveliest of incitements to thankfulness, the latter the most impressive of cautions to humility; each of them surely and obviously far more impressive in themselves than they would have been had his own motive and desire been the ground of his apostleship: for how could he be thankful for that as a gift, which was not given to him—which, to use his own distinction,‡ "came out from him," and did not "come unto him,"—or how should a man feel himself bound by an indissoluble chain, when it was but a band woven by his own mortal hands? And next in logical—I mean in rational—order to these impressions was the

* 1 Cor. iv. 1. † 2 Cor. v. 20. ‡ 1 Cor. xiv. 36.

sense of a measureless distance between the high purposes and powers of his function on the one hand, and on the other the littleness of the human agent appointed to their discharge: between his own proper self, as "not worthy to be called an apostle,"* and that wonderful grace of God by which he was what he was.

70. Could he have experienced this profound emotion, could he have thus vividly contrasted the magnitude of his work and the minuteness of his faculties, if his office had been self-assumed? No; for if he had felt the whole force of that contrast, he never could of himself have assumed it. A warrant from God may indeed silence the voice of self-abasement, by the counteracting principle of a faith that the man whom He prompts and palpably commands, He also will enable. But without that warrant, if he thinks meanly of himself, and duly of the office, how can he assume it? Will it be said he has a warrant, a warrant written on the fleshly tables of his heart? Who is the witness to it? "If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true."† So our Saviour, with a profound condescension, which we it seems are too lofty to imitate, vouchsafes to speak of His own title to be heard as a teacher sent from God. But perhaps it may be replied, Nay, but "the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits;"‡ and to what—that we are the ministers of religion? No; but "that we are the children of God." That pecu-

* 1 Cor. xv 9. † John v. 31. ‡ Rom. viii. 16.

liar kind of evidence which is granted as a witness to the private person concerning himself, on his own responsibility, is not to entitle him to undertake the spiritual care of others without the commission of the great King; any more than the same knowledge of his ordinary, or even extraordinary, competency for social duties, which qualifies a man to stand and act as a private member of society, would entitle him, in civil subject-matter, to assume the functions of government without an appointment from the civil authorities.

71. Besides, let us put this argument:—If a man has viewed in all its length and breadth and depth the responsibility of the ministerial office; and on the other hand regards his own unworthiness in the spirit of Christian self-abasement; if he therefore is convinced that nothing but a Divine warrant can justify his undertaking that office: must he not also feel it to be a part of his conscientious obligations, to see that that warrant is as credibly and as impartially attested as may be? Must he not therefore rejoice to find that there exists a channel in which that commission has been conveyed by historical derivation? Will it not tend to satisfy his conscience if that historical claim be so much as presumably accurate? Will it not be a balm to all his uneasy scruples, and a gift of value beyond all computation, if, through Divine mercy, it be as palpably just, as morally certain, as the very canon of Scripture that defines the only final standard of appeal by which the faith itself is esta-

blished? Will he at the least in any case absolve himself from the duty of a searching inquiry into that claim before he rejects it? Will he not be struck with the greatest horror at the very idea of substituting for the impartial attestation of the Divine warrant, which it professes to convey, the biassed and questionable witness of his own unaided, uncorrected judgment? It may be of his fancy, it may be of his caprice; for who can inwardly separate them, with clear consciousness, the one from the other? Who can expect that other men, imbued with their own opinions in religion, will recognise any authority in him to rebuke them, when his title to minister rests upon precisely the same foundation of inward self-persuasion as their title to think? Who can venture to trust himself to the partial witness of his own private spirit, and set aside without examination the inquiry whether an authority, which obviously has at least the first conditions of impartiality, be or be not also credible and valid?

72. I do not say—God forbid!—that every man who has assumed the functions of the ministry without first convincing himself that he has, either certainly or with the best probability, the apostolical warrant for its assumption, has thought meanly of the office, or arrogantly of himself. It is well known how much a happy, a providential inconsistency, has done to avert these evils. But this is not too much to say, that the attestation of the inward summons of the

Spirit by an outward call which that Spirit has likewise appointed to be the final criterion—if we may trust the experience of St. Paul, or if we may argue from the reason of the thing—is calculated to produce most important and beneficial effects upon the characters of the ministers of Christ. It quickens their gratitude and their responsibility. It enables them to magnify their office, to enlarge their conception of its vastness and solemnity, without tempting them therewith to elevate the standard of their self-esteem: for the simple reason, that they do not found their title to its exercise upon any assurance of which they are the sole witnesses or the final judges, nor upon any merely human approbation of their fitness, but upon the breadth of a Divine command—upon a voice which, whatever be their opinion of its sufficiency, is authorised to speak the will of God in the matter. Thus it maintains the sense of absolute dependence, and, rebuking the spirit of egoism, compresses and confines it within the narrowest possible limits.

73. These considerations, connected with the Divine commission of the Christian ministry, have, it would appear, gained more than they have lost in force and impressiveness, since the apostolic age. The vicissitudes, which the Faith and the Church have survived; the immense tract of time through which they have descended; the works which they have wrought upon earth; the essential identity of vigour which they always exhibit; the dignity and solemnity of incorpo-

ration into so long-drawn a line of spiritual ancestry from so high a stock, and all the associations which belong to it; each and all of these supply numberless ideas, whose power must have grown progressively with the lapse of ages, and have added to that lustre of revelation, which adorned the character of the early bishops, every element of the noble and the venerable that the history of human nature in its highest form can supply: so that they who now hold of the apostles by derivation and descent are still in the same position as was St. Paul, and that too with new accessory aids, and they have the same advantage for duly appreciating their office and humbling themselves; the same reflections to chasten and subdue them in the midst of excitement, popularity, and power; the same genuine and sober comfort to sustain them when the spirit of unbelief makes head.

It is no answer to these proofs of the advantageous tendencies of this lofty idea, to say St. Paul inferred thus and well from his Divine commission, but other men will infer otherwise and abusively. St. Paul's feelings on the subject are an instance not only of beneficial, but of natural and accurate results from that view of his office in which he regarded it. It is true that the best theories may be perverted, but yet upon the whole they will make the best men; and more faulty theories will be proportionably perverted and with still worse effect.

74. Besides, are we not entitled to believe that ecclesiastical power will usually, like civil authority

and influence, be most beneficially conceived of and employed, where it is hereditary and not acquired?—

ἀρχαιοπλούτων δισπότων πολλὴ χάρις.*

Mr. Burke has reasoned admirably of the softening influences of transmission upon the possessors of power, and has thus accounted for the singular political moderation of the English people. That which he has applied to a particular case is a general truth. We know—the experience of the world, the experience of our own country and generation teaches us—that upon the average, and with however glaring exceptions (exceptions the more glaring, perhaps, because of the undoubted truth of the rule), men of high descent (I do not speak of wealth) are, in their natural position, found to have a greater proportion of mental power and higher sentiments and principles than others. One obvious way of accounting for the fact is, that they are brought into contact with more ennobling associations, and they are also more directly affected by the restraints and censure of general opinion. These same circumstances (and for the present I put out of view every higher consideration) are true of those who pass into the ministry of the Church, which still is set on a hill among us; and who are thereby made lineal successors of the saints and fathers and sages of old time, and cannot be so wholly void of sympathy and shame as not to find in that connection some additional stimulus to virtuous and elevated action, some new

* Æsch. Agam. 1010.

motive to avoid misdoing. It would be visionary to hope, that such sentiments should be effectual with all; but it would be surely unreasonable to deny, what is enough for my purpose, that they are in their own proper nature, and as a general rule, helpful towards that which is good.

75. It would hence be reasonably anticipated, that the prominence of individual teachers in different religious communions should be less in proportion as those communions had adhered closely to the idea of the Apostolical Succession, if it has here been correctly argued that the tendency of the succession is to subordinate the individual to the Church, and to diminish his relative importance: and I think the facts will bear out the reasoning. Omitting the Eastern Church, respecting which I have not the necessary information, I take first the Church of Rome, and I find there that no single teacher is with her employed absolutely as a standard, although it may be true that the prominence of St. Thomas Aquinas in her schools of divinity, and his authority, as compared with that of the higher sources, is excessive. Her constitution, however, does not allow us to expect that she should realise the fullest advantage from the Apostolical Succession; because, instead of preserving the idea of that succession as collegiate, she has gone near to absorbing its essence and vitality in the line of a single See; and because the idea of the Popedom is by no means an adequate substitute for that of the more enlarged and diffusive goverment of the Church. If, on the

other hand, I turn to the Reformed Communions, I find that in some of them the succession has been wholly discarded; in others it has been held that its episcopal powers might be exercised by the presbyterial order, or circumstances have compelled such an exercise, at least provisionally. Misfortune has followed; for here, together with these deviations from the idea, we find the very result in question—the prominence of individual teachers, and the relative depression of the idea of the Church: the names of Luther, Calvin, Arminius, Wesley, assumed by Christians as their religious designations, notwithstanding the injunction of * Saint Paul, and a degree of authority assigned to them which Catholic teaching could never allow. But in the Church of England neither is any such distinctive name adopted; nor is there in point of fact, nor has there ever been at any time, notwithstanding the copiousness of her theology, or even the errors of her writers, any overbearing influence monopolised, or any school formed, by any of her members. I do not here speak of contemporary appellations, ascribed in a hostile spirit and destined to no endurance; but of the voluntary and extensive assumption of the name of a particular teacher as a religious designation.

76. And here we are naturally led to the next head under which it is proposed to view the doctrine of Succession—namely, its tendency to establish the due relation between the clergy, as governors in the

* 1 Cor. i. 12.

Church, and the people. Our civil governors administer a power which is divine, indeed, because it belongs to the law of nature; but not divine in a plenary sense, because it is not determined to a particular form in revelation: and accordingly there is no particular designation of those persons to whom allegiance should be confined. But the general principle of religion is not only invested with a sanction from God, like the general principles of government—it is also embodied by the word of God in specific ordinances and institutions; and conformably thereto there is a particular designation of the persons by whom they were to be administered; that is to say, a permanent provision for their appointment, without which an institution which was to be visible and active could hardly satisfy its definition or be called complete. And thus the succession takes the best securities against a misunderstanding, by priests or people, of their relative positions. Where it prevails, there can hardly be a question who are the parties ultimately empowered to decide on doctrine, to administer discipline, to send forth labourers into the vineyard. The people comprehend why it is that they do not appoint, even if they or some of them present, their minister; that they are not entitled to prescribe his doctrine or to dismiss him from his post, or to interfere with his administration of the sacraments; and they likewise know who is competent to decide upon these matters. I do not say that no substitutions have been found in other cases to supply, partially at least, the want of the

succession; but the experience of this island, both northwards and southwards,* amply proves how much more easily and securely these weighty questions of right are adjusted where it is retained, than where it has been suppressed or lost.

77. I cannot help feeling also persuaded that we may henceforward realise, together with the advantage of a clear view of the relation of the clergy to the people, a fuller sense of the duties of the people, as an integral portion of the Church, than we have felt in times when sloth and ease had rendered us less alive to the elevation and the true strength of the ecclesiastical position of the Church. Antiquity yields abundant evidence of regulations, which, in conformity with the clear spirit of Scripture, provided a broad and open course for the zeal of the lay members of the Church. When the sense of the unseen world is faint and dim, when the true spirituality of the Sacraments which the priest administers is forgotten, when the conception of his office is lowered, when his actual standing in the apostolic line is depreciated or unknown,—then the priesthood itself may entertain a jealousy of laymen, and a fear that, if any religious offices whatever be ostensibly assigned to them, the consequence will be, on the part of the people in general, an entire forgetfulness of the distinctive character of the clergy. But this jealousy, of which our own country has had some experience, becomes needless and unmeaning,

* See ch. vii. 159—166.

and in practice it rapidly decreases, when the sacerdotal office is seen in its historical connection with our Saviour through the persons of the apostles, and in its actual stewardship of the Holy Sacraments. Nowhere is the idea of the episcopal and presbyterial functions more elevated than in the Epistles of St. Ignatius; it is with some a cause of reproach against them: yet nowhere, on the other hand, is there, I believe, a more beautiful conception of that idea as applied to its lay members (the highest form under which any part of the Church can be regarded)—namely, the idea of a priesthood, offering up the perpetual sacrifice of themselves in body, soul, and spirit, through the Redeemer, to God. Such is ever the harmony of truth—such was the harmony of the Church in the days of her virgin love. And thus it is a mistake to suppose that the effect of Catholic principles is, unduly to elevate the clergy with relation to the people—it is much rather, to raise the position of both.

78. Next in order I come to consider, how the Apostolical Succession affects the members of the Church at large in their individual capacities. I will not here argue in detail upon the advantage of having an ecclesiastical system so organised that everywhere there shall be men given to the study and defence of the truth, able generally to assert and explain it with far more of accuracy and of unity than individuals can do for themselves; and thus bringing home to the perception and the profit of every man the doctrine that the Church has authority in matter of Faith, by supply-

ing the ordinary Christian with a credible though not an infallible judge in religious doubts. Nor do I inquire into the deeper question, what grace and what other ordinances of God may have been lost by such persons as may have wilfully despised and set aside this ordinance. And I need do no more than notice the beauty of that peaceableness and sobriety of the Christian temper, and of that unshaken firmness of belief, which so much more easily becomes the privilege of those who hold their religion as a thing substantive and certain, and as a transmitted inheritance.

79. But let us consider more at length, whether there be not an immense value in the additional comfort and confidence to the private Christian, being, as as they are, not arbitrary, but well grounded, which the independent witness of a Divine commission gives.

Now it is a question of common sense, whether the religious edification of a mind in its Christian infancy, needing milk and not strong meat (we might ask, how many of us are there who have advanced beyond this early stage?), will not be aided by the knowledge that the teachers, to whom in practice it must look for much of its support, have such a commission, not grounded upon their mere sentiment or inward conviction alone, however benevolent and sincere, but proveable by plain historic testimony? Such a mission rests upon the twofold basis of inward and outward evidence confirming each other, instead of relying on the first alone, liable as it is to every kind of misinterpretation, when not verified from without.

Not that we should, therefore, be led to a blind belief, as in an infallible teacher; but there will surely be more and more of reasonable ground for firm faith, in proportion as we see the hand of God clearly designating as His organ and ambassador him who may be our spiritual adviser, especially in those numerous cases where the understanding fails to carry us to the extent of our need, and we are left to walk by the instinct of child-like trust.

80. Now let us suppose such a mind tempted, for example, with rationalising doubts, questioning whether there really be anything of spiritual grace in the Gospel, and seeking advice and counsel from a minister of God, it may be upon the bed of agony or in the very grasp of death. Grant that the consulted party may have the requisites of Christian character and virtue, as well as competent abilities; grant that he may appear to speak so as we, in our human frailty, should judge suitable to the dispensations of our Heavenly Father—still, when the moral being is rocked from its foundations, and a part of the incumbent trial is to satisfy the disquieted and turbulent questioner within that the matter spoken is such as befits the high origin it claims, then, I ask, is it nothing that the tempest-tossed understanding is not left merely to abstract speculation founded upon its own antecedent perceptions of the rules and laws of truth, but that he who has come to supply its need is able to say, in addition to the ostensible goodness and comfort of his assurances, "that which I say is said

under an awful responsibility: I who speak, have been commissioned to carry a message from God to man, the message of the Gospel of Christ. His commission came to me by no mere fancy or conclusion of my own, but from the hands of those to whom He in the flesh, seen by their eyes, heard by their ears, handled by their hands, intrusted it, to be delivered down in perpetual descent: so not the wit or will of man, but He, the Holy One, has given me the power and the charge to minister to your soul, at the most awful peril of my own." I ask, are there no more elements of probability in such an historical commission than in a supposed inward message, of which there is no example in Scripture, and to which it is not in the nature of things that any test adequate to prove its genuineness should be applied?

81. Thus we have seen that, through the doctrine of the apostolical succession, the claims of the ministerial office are brought altogether out of the region of doubt and speculative assumption into that sphere where they are tested by historical inquiry: thus they receive the simple and strong support of that evidence of the senses by which we are governed in common life, and by which we are enabled so easily to interchange the perceptions we may hold in common, and to enlarge and corroborate the common knowledge by becoming witnesses for one another. But while the claim of the clergy is thus placed on a basis intelligible to all men (for there can be few to whom the general idea of historical credibility may not be made

to convey a tolerably clear impression), and while inward illumination is rejected as unfit in its own nature to furnish the credentials of their office, let it not be supposed that it is repudiated in its own proper place and function. That which is inward and mystical in Christianity is on the contrary in the most absolute harmony with the doctrine of the succession of pastors; and it is in truth the fit and only complement of the germane ideas of perpetual visibility in the Church, of her unfailing and infallible witness to the faith, and of the secret influences of grace pervading all her ordinances, and especially enshrined in the Holy Sacraments.

82. Further, if visibility be a condition of the Church (and if it be not I grant that the whole fabric of these arguments must fall, and much more than these together with them), then that condition is most amply satisfied by a perpetual public ministry of divine institution. Some personal succession is necessary to the Church upon the simple ground, that it has the promise of perpetuity as a visible society. Now the governing body is that which most closely and palpably identifies the Church of one age with that of another. In the governing body of a society resides that principle of life, by virtue of which it enjoys permanency; and around this vital centre gathers the fluent and shifting mass of its individual members. There is manifestly no principle of perpetuity in the body of lay or ordinary churchmen. The Christianity of the private Christian terminates, strictly

speaking, with his own natural life; he does not transmit it to others; however fruitful he may have been made of moral and spiritual good, he has no authority to administer baptism. Next, the presbyter indeed transmits, but that which he gives terminates with the individual to whom he gives it: in his order there is therefore some approximation to that for which we are seeking; but the bishop conveys the power of administering Sacraments, whereby the Church is continually replenished with children; of ordaining priests, by whom Sacraments are administered; and of consecrating bishops, by whom in their turn these powers may be communicated anew to others, who may replace the actual holders, and hand them on from one generation to another. In this line therefore alone it is, that the effective principle of continued propagation is carried down from the apostles of Christ to the latest age; and surely therefore the succession of bishops, by which the Church is in fact made perpetual, is also in idea the fit representative of her perpetuity. The visibility of the Church and her chartered permanence are thus blended together in one conception; and they are the more conspicuously and forcibly exhibited by being concentrated in the persons of those who exercise the most authoritative and prominent functions in her ordinary administration.

83. But further, we have seen that the whole scheme of Christianity is pervaded and distinguished from every other religion, including even its revealed forerunners, the patriarchal and Jewish dispensations, by

that mystical character, that combination of a body with a soul, of the outward sign with the inward grace, which brings it into such perfect and comprehensive harmony with the mixed nature of man as both a material and an immaterial being. It is the living and life-giving energy of the Spirit of God, which animates the whole body of the Redeemer, and moves it according to His will, in all the forms prescribed for its exercise and development. Nothing can be more profoundly solemn than the belief, still shared, thanks be to God, by nearly all who bear the name of Christ, that the motions of this Divine Spirit wait in some special sense on certain functions of religion, discharged by man at his own discretion, like other acts of his common life. Nothing can be more certain than that the Catholic faith sees, in all the legitimate action of the Church, nothing but an outward shape in which the operations of the power of God are clothed and made palpable to mortal view.

84. Without this belief, we should find little more in the revelation of naked truth than a practical and bitter mockery. To us, as men, in our unawakened or relapsed condition, the holy commandments of the Gospel are a writing of condemnation. The eye sees them, the judgment perhaps wholly or partially affirms them, but there is a void between us and them, that our nature cannot overpass. The dispositions required for embracing and obeying them are wholly alien to our own; and it is manifest that the mere issue of an order does not convey the power or the will to carry

it into execution. Spiritual then in their own composition, and suitable only to the spiritual being, they are, as it were, irrelevant with respect to man, until in the first instance there be in him a spiritual movement towards them.

85. But again, like the precepts, so neither did the miracles, wrought in support and in attestation of Christianity, of themselves bring home a spiritual influence to the human heart. It is true that they were supernatural; and though the precepts were also supernatural in their truth and beauty, yet the miracles had this advantage as an instrument towards conversion, that the supernatural character in them was more evident and legible to the mass of mankind; for the truth and beauty of the precepts could only be fully discerned by a mind in some degree attempered to them. But there was this principal feature in the miracles—an exhibition of power: they embodied and set forth that of which no man, however degraded, has lost the perception, because it is perceivable without any desire or sense of good; it was power superior to that wherewith demons and magicians wrought, for if cast out the demons by a sovereign strength, and it burst those bands of death which magic had never found itself able to relax. Doubtless it was power in union with benevolence; and to read in the benevolence of the miracles an attestation of their divinity would be an operation like reading the same lesson in the beauty of the precepts. But while in this point of view they were alike, the miracles brought the spiritual

kingdom one degree nearer to the location for which it was destined within us, in that they showed intelligibly to the mass of mankind one, at least, of the attributes of Deity in palpable connection with that Gospel, by whose ministers they were wrought.

86. But there was still a barrier not overpassed. The miracles, as manifestations of power, addressed themselves to the understanding of man, acting in combination with the most ordinary feelings of his nature. Even as exhibitions of benevolence they addressed themselves indeed to his moral sense. But what could have been the effect of either when standing alone, without an independent and more inward spiritual influence? For the action of the understanding, whether impelled or not by apprehension, was common to man even with the devils; and what availed an appeal to the moral sense when that sense was both essentially diseased, and enfeebled to the last degree? Practically it was unable to prevent our recognising, under a greater or a less degree of prudential limitations, the inclinations of self as the law of action, and the interests of self as its end. How should a will thus actuated abdicate its own supremacy without the application of an extrinsic power, and how could that power be found in abstract reasoning alone? And the same reasoning applies to all those rites which, rendered so efficacious by grace appointed to dwell in them, would without that grace be no more than symbols addressed to the imagination. The same applies to all exhibition of doctrine, even to the Divine

Word itself. The holiest exhortations, so Scripture teaches, could not avail, but for the parallel and hidden movements of that grace which in Christianity makes religion a power instead of a form. One may say to a man, and say truly, "You are God's creature, you *ought* to serve your Creator." But that word "ought," which carries with it, in the mind of a deeply-penitent man, a resistless energy, has no stringency to our natural perceptions: perhaps even the naked proposition might be denied—at all events its results would be evaded. We have not therefore yet arrived at the means by which a spiritual life is actually brought home to the heart of man. It is not the sound doctrine, nor even the presenting of that wholesome food to the heart as a seed is laid in the ground, nor the appreciation of the stimulants of fear, and hope, and unappreciable love. There is still wanting a mystical and secret link between the knowledge implanted, in which its spiritual uses lie locked as in a kernel, and the character of the man: that connection, that capacity of intercommunication, between the heart of the man who is to know and the heart of the thing which is to be known—that power of extracting the nutriment on the one side, which seconds and meets the capacity of yielding it on the other, must be supplied by the inscrutable agency of divine grace.

87. This gem, destined for an earthly use, requires a casket—this casket a keeper. The casket is found in the Holy Sacraments; the keeper in their appointed, hereditary, and perpetual guardians. By these living

agents is the dispensation of God made living in its external form, as it is in its inward energy. By their custody it is kept decently apart from the crowd and the tumult of earthly things; and, separated a little from the stage of our perpetual conflicts, it is more conspicuous to the eye of the weary ones who seek for rest. The Word, trenchant as it is, speaks not to them by whom it is unopened; the Sacraments feed not them who do not repair to their dispensation; the providential machinery of life has no beauty, no meaning, to our dull eye, reluctant to perceive the nearness of the Almighty; by a standing apostolic ministry that system of instruments, which is found at best, not always, alas! to win back the sheep that are astray, is completed; the word and voice of God are made importunate—are brought to the very door of the heart of man; if perchance, though he will not rise from his bed of self-centered repose for love of the voice that calls, yet even for peace' sake he will unbar and open it.

Are not these then great moral and great spiritual uses? And when we have more accurately adapted our lives to the framework of the Catholic system, and have so more deeply drunk into its spirit, shall we not see its beauty more keenly, shall we not feel its purposes more profoundly, and be less crude and more persuasive in telling of them?

88. I know not the way of access to those minds which are satisfied to put aside the contemplation of the essential and inherent character of tenets claiming

to be true and authoritative, because they can find that priests have been sometimes ignorant, ambitious, cruel.

> "The love of contest and the lust of blood
> Dwell in the depths of man's original heart." *

They are still our frail and sinful brethren; yet amidst the wild and wayward scenes of human destiny they have diffused commonly a sanctifying, and almost uniformly a softening influence. May there be mercy for them and us!

89. We must beware of judging unjustly from narrow and partial views, and likewise of defrauding ourselves from the same cause. Yes: these are days when we have especial need to take heed to ourselves, and to watch, if it might be, hundred-eyed, against these assaults upon the faith which are, perhaps more than ever, proceeding not only from † our flesh and blood, but from "principalities and powers," from "the rulers of the darkness of this world," and from "spiritual wickedness in high places." The Church must be the more careful to take unto herself the whole armour of God; and particularly to guard the doctrines of spiritual grace as the mainsprings of the whole Christian dispensation, and the institutions wherein, as in inner fortresses, those powers are lodged. If there be a tendency in the men of the present age to lower the estimate of those institutions, it is their misfortune. Let not those whom the Church has taught

* The Fall of Alipius, by R. M. Milnes, M.P.
† Eph. vi. 12, 13.

by lukewarmness contribute to their remaining under their delusion. If the vital powers of the Gospel be denied, and the vineyard of the Lord ravaged by a proud and most irrational presumption, if "the boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field devour it," they can at least raise unceasingly the voice of earnest prayer: "Return, we beseech thee, O God of Hosts! look down from heaven, and behold and visit this vine; and the vineyard which thy right hand hath planted, and the branch that thou madest so strong for thyself." *

* Ps. lxxx. 13—15.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SPECIFIC CLAIM OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

1—4. Question whether the Church of England has Catholic rights. 5, 6. Materially affects the question of legal establishments. 7—15. The distinct guarantees for her creed and her historical continuity. 16—19. Presumption in favour of the Dissenter as against the Deist. 20—27. And of the Church as against the Dissenter. 28. The argument against Romanism is separate. 29—37. Question of historical identity considered. 38. Conclusion in the affirmative.

1. I AM now about to offer some arguments upon the claim of the Church of England on our adhesion and allegiance. It is not proposed in this place to deal with the details of her constitution; with her theological distinctions; with her pure and noble services; with her advantageous position for re-uniting bodies now in a state of conflict or of reciprocal alienation; with her excellent social influences; or with her humane and tolerant spirit: these, so far as they exist, are all the natural results of her doing that which history shows her to have done, viz. of taking and keeping her stand upon the line of ancient and divine ordinance in all essential matters of ecclesiastical polity. The argument of this chapter is for her claim to be regarded as the Church of the country; not to be made such, but to be acknowledged such: and this not as matter of favour, of encroachment, of bare human preference, however authoritative, but of descent

and actual transmission, by which she retains her identity from the time when Christianity was first preached in Britain, certainly long before Augustine; an identity unimpaired by the fact, that in the former part of that period she contracted much of doctrinal impurity; much more then, not injuriously affected by her having during the latter centuries of her existence purged it, as we trust, away. This chapter does not therefore pretend to offer any general view of the Church of England or of her claims, but merely to present that specific claim which she prefers as the witness of primitive doctrine, and in virtue of her historical continuity.

2. It seems an injustice that the Church should ever be counted merely as one of a number of competing sects; and yet it must be admitted that, considering the mental habits of the day, there is an appearance, though an appearance alone, both of arrogance and of paradox, in the claim that another and a higher footing should be assigned to her. There can, however, be no doubt that, in the apostolic times at least, the Church was one, and that heresies were condemned among the works of the flesh. And heresies are the seed of schism, as schism in its turn reproduces heresy. But no man can be a schismatic (although he may be involved in the consequences of schism) without a principle in his mind essentially and in spirit heretical. Now it is reasonable to ask why—if the apostles never contemplated the existence of a variety of bodies putting forward equal claims to

be considered as in the strict and proper sense Christian Churches, and if, on the contrary, they most explicitly maintained the necessity of unity in the body as well as in the spirit—why it is that this portion of their teaching is to be set aside in compliance with the evil humours of the day? By what authority have we, or any of those around us or preceding us, presumed to alter one of the divinely revealed conditions of Christianity?

3. The modern temper, it will be found, leads us to act directly in the teeth of apostolic diction and practice. Those holy men ever speak of *the* faith, of *the* Church; we, on the other hand, as if there were faiths many, and Churches many. I am not yet inquiring which is the true faith and the true Church; nor yet hastening to decide that in no more than one body can the grand results of the Christian covenant be found to have been in certain degrees accomplished; but in remarking simply that the notion of a number of bodies not observing the laws of Church communion, and a number of forms of religious profession differing in material particulars, without any preferable claim on the part of one or another, belong, if to any Gospel at all, not to that Gospel which was preached by the blessed twelve. And this I trust is clear: negatively, because the apostles nowhere intimate the lawfulness of such a state of things; positively, because they inculcate in distinct terms the doctrine of "one faith," "one body, and one spirit." Which faith is right it may be difficult to find—difficult to know that we

are right; at present it is rather to be feared that, letting slip the idea of the unity of the faith, forgetting that, whichever it be, it is in its essence one, and slumbering in easy indifference respecting all unity, we ought to know, that we are therefore necessarily wrong; which is the first, and a laborious and painful step, towards becoming right.

4. This general statement, founded on the preceding chapters, brings us to the point where it behoves us to consider whether, having found that there is a faith and a Church to which the promises of the Redeemer were formally given, and that the notion of that faith and Church is not compatible with the present state of the religious world, we have any ground to urge that the Church established by law in this land has a right to be considered within its borders as having the stewardship of the covenant, and the care, in a religious sense, of the souls of the people—whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear. Of this proposition I am to maintain the affirmative, leaving for another place such observations as may offer themselves, with reference to the position of those who decline to admit the claim. Now those who hold the negative are accustomed to reply, that the Church of England is essentially but one of a variety of rival sects, somewhat less recent in its foundation than most of them, but greatly surpassed in antiquity by one of the number; and having no claim to general preference but such as the choice of the state can give. In short, the question is, whether the Church now

established amongst us by law is to be regarded as invested, within her sphere, with Catholic prerogatives?

5. Now, were we to grant the position of the antagonist, it appears to me that, besides other more vital consequences, we should also lose our most secure ground for upholding the national and legal establishment of the Church. Nothing can be abstractedly more invidious than the selection by the will of any man or body, however elevated in station or power, of one out of many forms of religion for exclusive preference and favour, if there be not intrinsic reasons in the chosen communion to induce and to justify that choice; and supposing there may be considerations which may render such a course necessary, it is obviously one which must be calculated to create a soreness of feeling on the part of those who are excluded without any reason alleged, except simply this, we prefer, and by our preference you must be bound; and a greater soreness of feeling than might be anticipated where reason of a distinct kind should be alleged, even though, by the discontented among those to whom it was addressed, it might be deemed to be founded on false general principles. The question is in such case changed to an issue of fact. Alleging that we are morally bound to the recognition of the Church, we at least advance a plea which if proved is sufficient; while alleging mere choice is but overriding by power those whom we cannot convince. A man is now considered to adopt such views of religion

as please himself; but this is evidently no reason for his imposing them upon others. But if the ground of controversy be changed, and if it be said each man presumes the truth of his religion, and therefore, whether governor or subject, he is bound to act upon his presumption; then I say that the view of the Church, as visible, as transmitted, and as apostolical, brings the comparative claims for preference to a much more palpable and conclusive issue than we can reach if we admit no such character to belong to her institutions.

6. And it is because we have seemed to grant that the English Church was but a preferred and favoured sect, in our slumbering forgetfulness of her real nature and constitution, that we have suffered under many attacks which we have had ample means to repel. We are termed the law Church, the parliamentary Church, the sect denominated the established Church. But why are we, or rather why is our venerable mother, the great institution which enfolds us in her bosom, why is she the law Church? If because in her the law and the legislature have recognised the authoritative claims of Christian truth, and have read its characters in her aspect, then there is no reason why we should disclaim, but every ground for glorying in, the appellation. But if, on the other hand, the framers of the law, the members of the Government, have given her their support merely because she propounds opinions which are theirs, and not because she is the actual holder of Divine truth and authority,

then, whatever be her merits, they are acting in the spirit of error and of tyranny.

7. It may here be objected that the distinction taken is false, and that of course the governors, if they hold a certain set of opinions, must *ipso facto* believe them to be true. And now we come to the knot of this question, which seems to lie in a confusion of the different modes by which religious truth is attained, and in the false assumption that the members of the Anglican Church profess merely to have the same *data* from which to think in religion as those from whom we differ: that they have no general comprehensive guarantee of their belief, which, over and above the merits of particular doctrines, tested by inquiry, includes and secures the whole as one harmonised body of truth. We profess to hold the one objective, permanent, unchangeable truth of religion: a thing given to us and not discovered, not even discovered from Scripture, by us; and given to us, moreover, in the form of a visible, known, conspicuous, public institution. They, on the other hand, admitting, for the most part, a common tribunal of appeal in the Holy Scriptures, assume that every scheme of doctrine which men believe themselves to draw from that fountain is or should be of equal merit in the eyes of the legislator. All probably who use the phraseology complained of do not scruple to say much as this, and some even more.

8. I suppose they will admit that, if it had pleased God that one religious communion should bear upon

its brow in clear characters His Divine attestation, then, at least, there could be no doubt of the duty of governors, themselves individually belonging to that communion, to incorporate it so far as might be found practicable with the civil constitution of their country. But they seem to think no one body has any such *data*, any such palpable and demonstrable evidences, as to warrant this preference; that all rest upon a purely human and private interpretation of the word of God, and therefore that no one such interpretation can so far outweigh the others in authority, as to establish a difference in kind between the testimonies upon which they rest. Now it is this very difference in kind which, on behalf of the Church of England, is to be alleged; not that Cranmer and Ridley and Hooker were greater men than Bellarmine or than Owen, or than Fox, or than Socinus, but that they were men acting distinctly in the line of the Divine appointment as conservators and defenders of the truth, and standing upon the true Apostolical foundation which sustains the imperishable fabric of the Church: acting indeed not for themselves, not (even in a human sense) on their own credit and authority, not in their own individuality, but simply as seekers and witnesses of facts, those facts being the blessed doctrines and institutions of Christianity as given to the world by the Apostles of the Redeemer.

9. In another place we have to consider whether these allegations are substantiated. It is enough here, that they are made. For our antagonists cannot be

surprised, that we who make them should object to hear our Church called merely one of many sects. We may be presumptuous, we may be wrong, in maintaining and believing that the faith which we hold, and for which we contend from Scripture, and the institutions in which we think it to be embodied, are not the inventions of human opinion, but are in all essential respects the very faith and institutions which were a gift, a deposit, entrusted by God to man. But if we are right in holding it, then we are also right in disclaiming the title and character of a sect. And as a private person, if I found that I had been wrong in believing the English Church to answer to the description given in Scripture of the Church, if I could not recognise in her the character belonging to the parts of that permanent body which is to be preserved to the end in all necessary truth, I should be bound in conscience at once to look for the signs and marks of that body elsewhere, so clear does it appear to me that God ordained and contemplated one Church, and made visible continuity a condition of that one Church.

10. We follow the institution, which, existing in this country for sixteen hundred years or more, was founded among us by missionaries undoubtedly apostolical: which has kept unmutilated among us the Divine word: which has handed down the performance of its offices by uninterrupted succession from man to man through a line of bishops: which has given us the primitive creeds of the Church as limits

of its interpretation of Scripture: which has, with whatever human admixtures of corruption, testified to the truth and wrought righteousness among the people: which has, with whatever doctrinal abuse, never forsaken those great Scriptural positions which are brought out in her ancient symbols: and which, therefore, coming to us in the first instance with clear and sufficient marks of the Christian Church upon her, has never at any time so far degenerated as to lose those marks; as to abandon those truths and those sacraments which are appointed for the salvation of the soul. And we still bear strong even of unconscious testimony to her claims in her familiar appellation, the Church *of England*.

11. What more do we want? It is sometimes said, and with good intentions, that a man cannot find everything he wishes in any religious denomination, and must therefore adhere to that, which on the whole most coincides with his feelings. But what a weak foundation, what an ill-formed habit of mind, is indicated by such a method of healing divisions! This and most of our religious errors are grounded upon the fallacy, that it is the business of a man to compose a religion for himself, limited, it is true, by the condition of receiving the Scripture and perhaps some of its doctrines, but even these by no means clearly defined; and after having thus constructed his own scheme to select some one religious society suitable thereto, and join himself to its communion. But it is not our business to make a Church, nor to make a

religion, in such a sense that I may make one, you another, and he a third; and all rightly and according to the Divine will: for it is alike the business of him, of you, and of me, to find and recognise the features of that religion, and that Church, which God appointed, and which is among us the local representative of that universal body whereto He has promised victory over the gates of hell: and it is our duty, when we have found it, to deem that we have fallen upon the pearl of great price, and to sell all, that we may buy it. The finding or recognition whereof, is a chief function of our private judgment, and the reward of its right and humble use.

12. When we have found the Church of Divine institution, it is true we may see in it many things not accordant with our own wishes. I speak not here of things seeming sinful; but of things that may look strange, and do not approve themselves at once to our judgments. There are two courses which we may follow as shall appear right. One is, to endeavour so to adjust our feelings as that they shall approve: the other is, to endeavour, by the means which in virtue of our membership we possess, to rectify what, after serious consideration, we find reason to believe wrong: but upon no account to adopt that remedy, which must be worse than the disease—the abandonment of the body of the Church itself. Surely that continuity and perpetuity of the Church must have been utterly forgotten, and the troubles of the times must have produced a sad distraction in men's minds, in the evil

hour when the Presbyterians of Scotland, contrary as it appears to the opinion of the southern nonconformists, refused in their negotiation with Archbishop Leighton to distinguish between the political abuses and the spiritual essence of the Episcopal government; and when the Puritans withdrew themselves from the Church in England. For example, in the latter case, had they followed an opposite course, perhaps their question of clerical habits would not at once have been set at rest; perhaps by perseverance they might have carried into effect their own opinion; but the unity of the church had at all events remained. Who does not perceive the difference between remaining in a body, intending, by the means its laws allow, to endeavour to modify this or that one among its regulations, and withdrawing beyond its pale?

13. Great alarm is felt at its being held a duty to abide in the communion of the Church while it remains a Church, by those who assume that he who regards the Church of Rome as a real Church, can have no strong and deploring sense of the corruptions with which she is deformed. But let those who make such an assumption note these facts, which M. Merle d'Aubigné has recorded respecting Luther: that in February, 1519, he wrote to Spalatin,—"I know not whether the Pope is anti-Christ himself, or whether he is his apostle:" and at the same time he wrote, "that the Roman Church is more honoured by God than all others, is not to be doubted. St. Peter, St. Paul, forty-six popes, some hundreds of thousands of

martyrs, have laid down their lives in its communion, having overcome hell and the world, so that the eyes of God rest on the Roman Church with special favour. The worse things are going the more we should hold close to it; for it is not by separation from it that we can make it better. . . . There is no sin, no amount of evil, which should be permitted to dissolve the bond of charity or break the unity of the body." On which the historian, with much truth, observes, "It was not Luther who separated himself from Rome, but Rome who separated herself from Luther."*

14. We then maintain that we hold what we have received, not what we have in any sense made or discovered, though when we have tried it by Scripture it has not been found wanting. And perhaps the individual members of the religious denominations around us hold what they have received: but it is what they have received from the founder of their class, not from the time of the Apostles, by succession through a visible body and regularly appointed officers. For instance, we are not to suppose that the Society of Friends in their customs seriously found themselves upon Apostolic practice: they can only arise out of the venturesome attempt to judge what is most conformable to the scheme of Christianity, taken in a narrow form from Scripture, and as a sketch; then filled up with the colouring of their imagination. Adopting a part of what has been believed, they supply, at will, the remainder. True our Church also

* Vol. ii. p. 16.

superadds regulations to those of primitive times; but with this difference, that she receives entire what they handed down as necessary to salvation and as essential to the fabric of the Church, as matter, that is, of apostolic faith or practice. But every sect or man now draws his own definition of things essential: and all seem to proceed upon the notion rather of making or discovering, than of receiving, a religion.

15. They receive, indeed, the Holy Scriptures: but we quickly find how inadequate a guarantee this profession affords for the existence of anything like substantial Christianity in a Church. The Unitarians receive with us the Holy Scriptures; but they, so receiving those oracles, nevertheless deny the Deity and Incarnation of Christ, the personality of the Spirit, the corruption of human nature, and the eternity of future punishment.* Thus, though they receive the Scriptures, they make a religion from them, so unlike them, as utterly to nullify the virtue of that reception. They claim the liberty, in many important cases, of questioning the text, sometimes upon grounds not even plausibly historical: in all, they assert a license of interpretation, which renders the former and more direct and unambiguous measure a matter of small importance. They do not receive the Sacred Writings in the sense of primitive and Catholic Christianity;

* See Belsham's Letter to the Bishop of London. As this class of our religionists has no authorised formula of doctrine, I can only refer to the exposition of their tenets given by one of their most prominent men.

nor in connection with the Church, whose office it is to preserve and to expound them, and by association with which we acquire the blessed privilege of being in a position to learn and to digest them. We receive them illustrated by, and combined with, the general tone of Christian doctrine through all ages, knowing infallibly that there has always been a visible Church in possession of all fundamental truth, and therefore able to save the souls of men.

16. Some further exertion, however, is requisite to elucidate the distinction between receiving and making a religion. With this view I should put it to a modern Dissenter, who deemed the English Church but one of many sects, whether he would be satisfied if a Deist were to apply a similar appellation to his denomination, and should intend at the same time to include among the sects of which he spoke, not merely those bearing the Christian name, but all the varieties of natural religion. Would he be satisfied that the Deist should claim for his creed the same degree of evidence and authority as belonged to that of the Dissenter, drawn as this latter is professedly from the Scriptures? Would he agree that both should be treated as alike the creation of human opinion? As being, to the same extent, a formation of the mind itself rather than an impression upon it from without?

17. He would surely argue as follows: "I do not admit that the professors of your religion stand upon the same footing as those of mine. God has vouchsafed us a revelation. By that He has been pleased

to bring Divine knowledge greatly nearer to our capacities and conceptions than it was before. We have received that revelation, and draw our religion from it. You allege that you repair to the works of God, and interpreting them that you draw from the same source as we do. But this revelation is a limit upon the interpretation of Nature, and is far more definite and precise. In proportion to its greater definiteness and precision, is the probability, antecedent to any other consideration, that we are right, and you wrong, in the matters wherein you refuse to accede to our tenets. We, it is true, in interpreting Scripture, must in some degree, beyond a doubt, superadd what is human to what is divine. But by resorting to the most palpable manifestations of the Divine will, we have surely taken the most rational path to success in the effort to transfer the impress of that will into our minds, and to make it altogether our own. You have preferred the less ample evidence, the more remote and unconditioned, and less practicable investigation, to the more ample evidence, the more proximate, and defined, and practicable investigation. You may have been as diligent and as docile: but there is an original flaw in your proceedings which you are bound to correct before you have a right to rest contented in your creed; a rest which you can only with reason hope to attain, when you shall have used the best means in your power to render that creed conformable with the truth."

18. Thus the Dissenter might answer the Deist,

and that without any personal assumption, but merely insisting upon the obvious truth, that a man learning from revelation, is much more likely to attain divine knowledge, than one who only studies Nature, which, besides her not having been so shaped for this end, bears evidence of sharing in our corruption. But suppose the Deist to reply thus: "You assume the fact of the Revelation: prove that to me, and I grant in that case that you have a greater probability of truth, *à priori*, than I, and that we are not to rank as sects on the same footing antecedently to specific inquiry, because we do not draw from the same *data*, and thus we have not equal presumptions of correctness."

19. The Dissenter could not evade this appeal, and would of course be bound to reply upon such principles as these: that he would willingly enter into the inquiry, and would adduce his proofs of the existence of a revelation of the will of God: that, however, he was not the party who had made an assumption beyond what was warranted, but his opponent: for the Deist, in ranking together the professors of natural and of revealed religion as sects, as teachers of different forms of human opinion, had virtually assumed that there was no revelation, in which case alone it would be fair to represent their rival schemes as having equal claims to credence. He would entreat that above all things the two questions might be kept separate: that, *first* there might be a decision whether there was a revelation; if that be decided against him he must be content to argue from other

data: and even then he would be in no worse position than where the Deist had originally placed him: whereas if the decision were in his favour, it would at once take the ground from under the feet of his antagonist. And the Deist, if a candid man, would admit that *upon the decision of the prior question, whether there were or were not a revelation,* must depend the justice of his placing a Christianising body on the same footing with his own, in respect of their comparative liability to error.

20. And now let us substitute for the Dissenter, a Churchman: and for our Deist, the Dissenter, not as implying any offensive analogy, but in order to examine with accuracy the comparative positions of the parties as relates to a particular argument. The Dissenter, we will suppose, classes the Church Establishment as one of many sects, and imagines that the homage of those secular powers which acknowledge her apostolic claims, and give her a place in the law and in the constitution of the country, do in effect constitute the only foundation of her distinct privileges and existence. Perhaps he may place her lower than these competing forms of religion around her: for they have at least the approval of many private consciences, and depend upon it; while she exists by law alone, as he thinks, which does not show her to possess the real affections of any. He urges it upon the Churchman, that they both receive the Scriptures as containing all things necessary to salvation. And here his appeal is more stringent than that which he

himself might have received from the Deist, since the latter could not have claimed for the Book of Nature the same rank in the Dissenter's estimation as the Scriptures hold in the Churchman's. He will add that we do not like the Romanist claim for one Church any power of infallible interpretation. Upon this footing, then, and upon his own equitable right to be supposed equally sincere and diligent with the Churchman, he founds his expectation that an equal probability of orthodox interpretation shall be conceded to him with that which the Church assumes to herself.

21. Again the churchman must reply: "Admitting with joy our common acceptance of the Scriptures, and the similarity of result which God's unconfined grace often deduces from them, I still cannot admit that you stand upon the same ground in respect of antecedent probability with the Church. You are individuals not having a perpetual existence and not bound to take up the faith of other individuals who have preceded you. She is a body having permanent existence, and bound at all times to transmit the faith which she received, as well as to separate from it the glosses which design or ignorance may for a time have recognised as truths. But let this pass. Over and above such considerations, you receive the Scriptures, so does she: you use for instruments of interpretation, it may be, all human faculties and acquirements, and earnest prayer—so is she bound and wont to do: but she uses also another powerful illustration—the light

of primitive testimony and of general practice. As you would establish a moral sense in ethics from the history even of heathen and pagan nations, amidst the thousand incongruities which its course presents, so we can collect from amidst the rank abundance of error which has prevailed about, and even in, the Church of all ages an ample testimony, both direct and collateral, to the fundamental truths and facts of Christianity ever preserved and held there. Not only can we as reasoners effect this extraction in studying the records of antiquity, but as Christians we have received a special promise applicable to the subject.

22. "The Scriptures indicate distinctly the foundation of a Church one in body and in spirit; and of this Church the Redeemer has promised that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. The least extended and most just interpretation of which this text admits must surely imply, that this Church shall be continued to the end of time in the knowledge and effective possession of all fundamental truth. Grant that men cannot judge with absolute certainty of the universality, or of the fundamentality, of a given proposition in religion; yet both the one and the other are questions of magnitude, and are fair subjects for probable judgment; and the degree of probability will in many cases come as near certainty as our nature will allow, and may be commonly such as in other subject-matter, much more, then, in this, would render compliance a matter of moral obligation. In exact proportion, then, as it seems to the apparent fundamentality and

universality of a doctrine, is the probability of its truth; and we may be historically assured that a tenet was universal; we may be both historically and morally assured that it is fundamental. In this principle, then, we have a canon of interpretation of Scripture full of practical results; for example, in the Unitarian controversy, there can be no doubt that the doctrine of the Incarnation was held in the primitive Church; that its denial was considered a heresy; that it was viewed as fundamental, and asserted in all the creeds; and that it most profoundly affects, according as it is true or false, the character of the whole Gospel. Here, therefore, we have from antiquity, under sanction expressly Divine, a powerful attestation of the awful sentence of Scripture by the mouth of St. John, which nevertheless is denied by many who profess the Scriptures as their rule of faith. 'Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God.'*

23. "And there is a further use of antiquity. In the former section we have spoken of its authority, its Divine authority to convey and to teach all fundamental truth: it has a distinct character, that of a witness to facts. From it we receive, for example, the canon of Scripture, its exclusive authority as the standard of final appeal, the practice of infant baptism, the transference to the Lord's Day from the Jewish sabbath, the episcopal government and apostolical

* 1 John iv. 3.

succession; not as ascribing to it, after inspiration had ceased, authority to render these things binding as constituent parts of religion, but as allowing it a competency to bear witness like any other living agent to matters of fact; and that too a peculiar competency, in respect of the combined unity and fulness of its witness, and also of the Divine support proportioned to the magnitude of the objects of the institution and to the terms of the promises of Christ.

24. "From these two sources accordingly we find a light thrown upon the sacred word of God, and there is yet a third, in the general practice, scheme, and spirit of the Church, as developed through all the vicissitudes of history in a long series of ages, and the whole of which must be illustrative, in different degrees, of that Word by which the whole body of Christ is governed; unless we are to exclude from the inquiry into ecclesiastical records all application of those principles of common sense and of analogy, which are applied as matter of course to the study of every other institution known through history.

25. "While, therefore, you maintain that God has brought nearer to us by revelation the will which He had indicated less definitely in the works of nature and in the law of conscience; and while we concur with you in this position, we also proceed to show that God has brought revelation itself nearer to our understandings than it would have been while remaining a naked and simple documentary formula, by the light of historical illustration, and by the promises (for such, practically, is the least amount of the assurance

of perpetuity to the Church) that its fundamental truths shall be perpetually retained in the society to be founded by the apostles of Christ.

26. "Consequently, as you pointed out to the Deist that he had not availed himself of the best means in his power for attaining to the truth, and had omitted a portion of the *data* from which it is derivable, we now in turn point out to you that in going to the written word, laden as we all are with human corruptions and infirmities, you have omitted to take with you those helps towards its interpretation which the testimony of Christendom, and especially of the early undivided Church, affords."

27. It is open to the Dissenter to object that we are making an undue assumption in taking it for granted that such promises are in point of fact secured to the Church, and secured to it under the form of one body, and that our own communion is the legitimate representative of that body. If the apostolical succession be proved, then we apprehend there can be no doubt on these heads. For that proof we must refer to other sources, and the limited explanations I have deemed necessary in the course of these inquiries are offered elsewhere. But the Churchman may equitably beg of the Dissenter that the questions may be kept distinct, as the Dissenter in controversy with the Deist will protest against confounding the inquiry whether there be a written revelation with the question whether, if there be such a revelation, there are not presumptions in his favour as against his opponent. So we ask of our antagonist, that he should

first inquire into the doctrine of one perpetual and visible Church, with a regular succession in the ministry; and then take, as next in order, the question whether the English Establishment have or have not the claim to represent that Church in this our portion of the Christian world. If he repudiate the doctrine on inquiry, we shall stand with him no worse than we now do; but if he find that the Church is right in taking primitive Christianity for her model, and in desiring to appear as the depository of a simply transmitted faith, and as the representative first of its original promulgators and followers in this island, next and through them of their apostolic masters, then he will also probably be prepared in candour to admit that by such a charter she is placed on a ground different from that of sects, because although it undoubtedly comprehends human opinion in its evidence, yet it restricts the scope of its action by enlarging and bringing nearer home the testimonies which we are to consider as authoritative.

28. It is true that this too is a disputed title; and the Roman Catholic maintains that we are spurious representatives of the ancient Church of Britain, while in the Roman communion are discoverable, as he believes, the authentic lineaments of antiquity. This is a subject for separate investigation. It is not with him that we now argue: he must view us as sectarian, and we unhappily are led to the conclusion that his position in this country is liable to that epithet. But he will agree in the theory, at least, which

maintains that there was ordained to be, and that there is, a Church which is not sectarian, but which receives and transmits primitive truth, exercising a function different from that of sects, which mould and modify doctrine after their own crude conclusions. *His* opposition, therefore, cannot avail the Dissenter, who, if the existence of such a Church be once granted, is more likely to recognise it in ours than in that of Rome. I would, however, observe that there is this material difference between the controversy of the Church of England with the Church of Rome, and her relations to those congregations which have been formed in this country to hold communion with the pope, and therefore to refuse the communion of the Church. With both of these she tries the question of doctrinal purification; against the latter she likewise urges her own authority as within her limits exclusively apostolical and Catholic.

29. And now let us look briefly at the question whether the Church established by law in England has, in point of historical descent, higher claims than any that can be derived from mere legal establishment. Whether, if we admit that the Church was ordained to be visible, and the power of ministry therein to be conveyed in an episcopal succession, the Church of England comes before us fortified with those presumptive evidences of truth in doctrine, and those moral claims upon our filial regard, which will be freely admitted to belong, antecedently to an examination of particulars, to the institution in which these two ordained conditions are fulfilled.

30. There is no doubt that the Gospel was preached in England, if not in apostolical, yet in very early times, and professed in a visible society, governed by Bishops, who transmitted in it with exclusive authority the title to the ministerial functions. That when the Saxons themselves, yet unconverted, overran the island, the Christian religion still retained, in one portion of it at least, this known existence, and that the same society which had been originally established was still preserved in the land. That, towards the end of the sixth century the monk St. Augustine, from Rome, established another branch of the great Christian society in the south of England, which grew and flourished; and with which, after certain discussions on points of usage, the bishops and churches already existing in the island were sooner or later united. That this society, thus receiving an effectual re-organisation in the country, retained its identity as a visible institution until the time of the Reformation. Of all this there is no dispute among us.

31. But some, of Protestant opinions, say that this institution, though remaining outwardly the same, lost its identity as a Church before the Reformation, in consequence of the corruption of doctrine and prevalence of idolatry. This, however, is an opinion that will hardly be maintained in serious discussion. The *primâ facie* grounds for it are exceedingly weakened when we consider that the Scriptures remained uncorrupt, that their essential doctrines held their place undisputed in the creeds, and that the prevalent

errors, however grievous, firstly, were such as did not directly overthrow or deny, as Hooker says, the foundation; secondly, that they had not then been generally recognised and established as of faith by any Council of the Church, much less by any decree in which the Church of England had taken part. We may therefore assume, on the part of all those who believe in the perpetual visibility of the Church of Christ, that it was actually existing by unbroken succession in this country at the period of the Reformation.

32. At this point, however, those who contend that the transmission of the ministerial title in the way of Episcopacy is necessary, in order to demonstrate the legitimacy of the governing power in the Church, are met by a party among the Romanists, who contend, that the apostolical succession was broken in the consecration of Archbishop Parker. Upon the affirmative or negative which may be given to this proposition, turns the decision of the question whether those who hold the visibility and perpetuity of the Church, and the necessity of an apostolical commission to preclude all doubts respecting the title to the ministry, may or absolutely cannot recognise with consistency in the present Church of England the same institution which was originally planted in the country by the hands of the Apostles or their authorised successors. For none of the Reformed Church, at least, can conceive that a continuity maintained until the Reformation, was then destroyed by the restoration of primitive doctrine;

and no question is seriously raised affecting the succession at any period later than the consecration of Archbishop Parker.

33. The inquiry thus opened is one of a purely historical kind, into which it would be beside my purpose to enter at large. I shall observe, in the first place, that the Romanists are themselves distinctly at issue upon the question; some holding the affirmative and others the negative, upon the historical point of controversy, with equal tenacity. It may be well to give this in the words of a writer in a publication devoted to the interests of that communion, and under the control of one of its most prominent members, Dr. Wiseman:—

"The question of fact regarding the first Anglican consecration has lately been matter of controversy between several Catholic writers, and those of no mean reputation on either side."*

34. Dr. Lingard gives the following statement of the facts in his history†:—"Three months later (Dec. 6, 1559) the queen sent a second mandate, directed to Kitchin, Barlow, Scorey, Coverdale, the deprived Bishop of Exeter under Mary, John, suffragan of Bedford, John, suffragan of Thetford, and Bale, Bishop of Ossory, ordering them, or any four of them, to confirm and consecrate the archbishop elect; but with an additional clause, by which she, of her supreme royal authority, supplied whatever deficiency there might

* Dublin Review, Vol. v., p. 287.

† Lingard's History of England, Vol. v., note H.

be, according to the statutes of the realm or the laws of the Church, either in the acts done by them, or in the person, state, or faculty of any of them, such being the necessity of the case, and the urgency of the time. Kitchin again appears to have declined the office; but Barlow, Scorey, Coverdale, and Hodgskins, suffragan of Bedford, confirmed the election on the 9th, and consecrated Parker on the 17th. . . . . Two of the consecrators, Barlow and Hodgskins, had been ordained bishops according to the Roman pontifical, the other two according to the Reformed ordinal." Dr. Lingard entirely gives up the Nag's Head Fable. The "additional clause," it is hardly necessary to observe is, with reference to the view of the present inquiry, irrelevant. It was probably intended to dispense with any defects under the civil or canon law, and to imply the recognition of the consecration as valid by the crown.

35. The following is a sketch of the arguments of those among the Romanists who hold that the consecration of Archbishop Parker was void. That it was performed at a place called the Nag's Head Inn, by a single bishop, Scorey, who placed a Bible on the head of the Archbishop elect and said, "Take thou authority to preach the word of God sincerely." This fable was never heard of until more than a generation after Parker's consecration, and it appears now to be abandoned by universal consent. Further, it was contended that the ordinal of Edward VI. was defective. That the married state of some of the consecra-

tors rendered the rite invalid. That it was invalidated by separation from the Bishop of Rome, as head of the whole Church. That it was invalidated by separation from him in the simple character of Patriarch of the West. Nay, that Barlow, one of the consecrators, never had been consecrated himself. But this tale does not appear to have been promulgated until sixty years after the act on which it was brought to bear:* and I shall now content myself with giving a summary of the facts as they are stated on our part: observing that we are to remember they have proved satisfactory to many even of those who regard us as schismatical in respect of our doctrinal reformation, and of our separation from the Pope, whom they believe to be by Divine right head of the Church.

36. The official record of Archbishop Parker's consecration remains, and has lately been republished.† The ordinal employed is quite as definite and formal as that of the Roman Pontifical. The consecration was performed by Barlow, the Bishop of Bath and Wells, deprived under Mary, and then elect of Chichester; by Scorey, the similarly deprived Bishop of Chichester, then elect of Hereford; by Coverdale, deprived Bishop of Exeter; and by Hodgskins, suffragan of Bedford. It was done at the palace of Lambeth on the 17th of December, 1559. Two of these bishops at least were diocesan bishops of the province of Can-

* Palmer on the Church, Part VI. Ch. X.

† By the Hon. and Rev. A. P. Perceval, in the Appendix to his Volume on the Apostolical Succession. (Rivington's, 1839.)

terbury; and there are precedents, it appears, in urgent cases, for the consecration of a bishop by two instead of three persons of that order having jurisdiction; even in the instance of the see of Rome itself.

37. The objection from the married state of some of the consecrators is best answered in the summary language of Saint Paul:—"Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, (to take with us on our journey a Christian wife, ἀδελφὴν γυναῖκα περιάγειν,) as well as other Apostles, (the other Apostles, οἱ λοιποὶ ἀπόστολοι,) and Cephas?" *

The objection from separation is one applicable not to the consecration in particular but to the whole of our Reformation. If the Bishop of Rome have by Divine right the primacy in the Church, undoubtedly we are guilty of schism. If his patriarchal claims, legitimate perhaps in themselves, be pleaded, it must be replied that they could establish only a disciplinary authority, ordinary in its nature, and secondary as compared with those fundamental laws which Divine authority established for the constitution of the Church: and that the English Church, as she had existed for centuries before she came into ecclesiastical connection with Rome, was not bound, against the mind of her own Apostolical rulers, to receive the dogmas or the practices of the Roman bishop as determining the truth of the Gospel: nor would have been justified in superseding the Episcopal power in obe-

* 1 Cor. ix. 5.

dience to a superiority which was merely conventional. There are separate arguments, held by a part of the Roman Catholics, against the validity of Anglican orders: but they are such as others are not likely to admit: and they recognise the *fact* of the Succession. Upon that fact we stand.

38. And now to sum up in a few words the foregoing argument. It is applicable mainly to those who admit that the Church of England, as a Church, is not chargeable either with heresy or with schism. It represents to them that she has a special claim which they may not yet have considered, in addition to those negative conditions which they have thus admitted. It is this, that she gives credibility to her doctrine, and clear authority to her ministrations, by the fact that she teaches no articles of faith but such as have been drawn out of Scripture by the universal consent of the Church from the beginning, and that she is at this day historically the same institution, through which the Gospel was originally preached to the English nation; preached then, as it is preached now, by the ascertained commission of the Apostles of Christ, and through them by the will of Christ Himself.

CHAPTER VII.

CHURCH PRINCIPLES IN RELATION TO PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES.

SECTION I.—INTRODUCTORY.

1. Summary—2. Objections—3. Nature of the issue—4. Meaning of "Church Principles"—5, 6. Not opinions—7. Nor peculiar.

1. ACCORDING then to the arguments of the foregoing chapters, we are to recognise in the Church that institution which historically connects us with the Messiah; the instrument, by means of which we acquire a title to the promises of His covenant; and the body in which, as in a form or mould, the religious life of the individual is to be cast. In her Sacraments we are to acknowledge both the highest and the most determinate means of vital incorporation with the Redeemer, and in Him of true and not merely conventional union with one another. In her Apostolically descended ministry, such as we receive it upon historical evidence, we are to acknowledge the organ of her collective action; the medium of the intercommunication of those subordinate yet also integral members, into which she is not separated but distributed or disposed; the first witness of her doctrine; the appointed channel of her Sacramental gifts; and the principal machinery for her actual administration.

2. But it is by some supposed that such a repre-

sentation and conception of the Church and of her functions, is calculated to lead us either into or at least towards the abuses of superstition, to the theory and practice of intolerance, to an uncharitable estimate of the other reformed communions, and to division among the members of our own. As far as the second of these charges refers to political and legislative intolerance, it is treated elsewhere:* in the residue it is comprised under the other three heads of imputation. With these it is now proposed to deal.

3. Far be it from me to assert or to give countenance even by implication to the principle, that we are to be governed in the examination of ethical and theological questions, and determined in the choice of our conclusions by the convenient or salutary consequences which, as we may imagine, follow upon their adoption, either with reference to particular times and circumstances, or even in a more general view. The immediate criteria of truth and duty are, in my opinion, not only more healthful, but likewise far more simple and generally available, than the indirect and hazardous process of judging them primarily from results. But when the first methods have been used with due diligence, and have produced adequate conviction, it is both necessary in order to meet the charges of mischievous consequence with which the adversaries of any given doctrine will endeavour to load it, and moreover eminently consolatory, if we find

* 'The State in its Relations with the Church.' Chapter II. § 72—77, and VI. § 7. 3d ed.

that the legitimacy of our conclusions is attested by their competency to solve the perplexing problems with which the state of society abounds. And this inferior province is that in which I have chosen generally to range, as the sphere best suited to a private capacity in the Church. Now, the foregoing chapters have been intended to exhibit the ethical tendencies, under a general view, of the ideas to which they relate. If the reasonings contained in them be in any degree just, in that same degree do they tend to establish a general rule, that the experimental results of those ideas will be found favourable in any given case. It remains then to consider the particular case immediately before us: namely, the immediate and specific tendencies of these ideas in connection with the necessities, the duties, and the circumstances at large, of our own time and country.

4. One more caution must however be given, before entering on the proper subject matter of this chapter. There may be occasion in its course to make frequent and very concise reference to the views which have been summed up in the first paragraph of this chapter, considered collectively and as a system: if for this purpose I still venture to refer to them by the appellation of Church principles, it is not as presuming to insinuate that no one can be devotedly attached to the Church of Christ, or to the portion of it existing among ourselves, who does not concur in this particular representation of its character. On the other hand I would beg emphatically, and once for all, to

decline responsibility for any private sentiments other than those which I may for myself have enunciated, as belonging to the cause I desire to serve; while of course my argument would not allow me to deny, that the essential principles, here so faintly touched, do claim the assent of men, as being the primitive, the Catholic, the Scriptural, the true principles of an institution founded by Christ Himself, and therefore, of course, deriving its principles, whatever they may be, from Him: not as the indifferent notions of individuals, but as parts of what, by the very fact of our Christian profession, we are bound to hold.

5. I think that justice would entitle, nay perhaps that principle may require those, who are considered by some men peculiar, because they receive the doctrines of visibility and authority in the Church, of grace in the Sacraments, of succession in the ministry, of the anti-rationalistic handling of Christian truths at large, to protest altogether and *in limine* against applying to these religious principles the hazardous and seductive name of opinion. "Opinion," properly designates something partaking of what is merely human and arbitrary in its formation, something which seems to testify of itself that it is not clearly revealed, that its reception is a matter of indifference, that it has a subjective existence alone, and therefore has no claim to reception except where it is actually received. Every sound Christian (for example) would be shocked at saying, it is my opinion that Jesus Christ is the Redeemer of the world: would feel that there is a real though not always a palpable dis-

tinction between matters of opinion and of belief, as well as between matters of opinion and of demonstration: a distinction bearing in the first case mainly upon a moral, in the second principally upon an intellectual difference, in the relation between the thing perceived and the percipient mind. He would confess, that a real dishonour is done to matters of belief when they are treated as matters of opinion. Belief seems to be something of which the law and standard are external to ourselves: opinion, something depending on what is within us for its form and colour, and therefore essentially far more liable to be affected in its formation by the unchecked irregularities of the single mind. Saint Augustine goes so far as altogether to condemn opinion as applied to religious truth. And we may find some authority for this strong statement in its analogy to the method of Scripture, which treats the nearly equivalent term αἵρεσις* (or choice as it is commonly, but in this peculiar use, inadequately rendered,) as something essentially evil. Hence, among ourselves, the same word translated into English, heresy, bears as proper to it an obnoxious sense. And it may be observed that in Scripture generally we hear much of belief, of faith, of assurance, of reception, of truth, of the understanding applied to it, of knowledge: but nothing of that form of mental assent which we call opinion, and which is, when accurately understood, one too weak to afford a stable groundwork of practice or of character.

* Tertull. de Præscript. VI.

6. But upon what strong grounds do I allege that these propositions of religion are not to be handled as mere opinions? since it is generally owned that there are some perfectly legitimate subjects of theological opinion, and since it is clear that many would regard these as among them. The answer is this: that the Church at large has, with a wonderfully consenting testimony, ever held them to be declared, either explicitly or virtually, in the Scriptures, and has embodied them in the Creeds. Nor is the case less clear, as it respects the recognition of this general sentence by the Church of England. We find them in her articles, in her sacramental services, in her offices of ordination as well as in her acceptance of the Scriptures themselves, as regarded in their Catholic interpretation. We find them in the writings of her great divines, both professed as truths, and particularly employed in the controversy with Romanism. We find this attestation, as it were, countersigned in the charges and imputations of those who, unhappily mingling with their zeal a spirit of impatience and insubordination, carried the pretext of Reformation to a work which had become one of destruction; and who, from the period of Elizabeth downwards, have reprobated the Church of England as being in these very respects Popishly affected.* True, they have been denied by individuals, and have been at some periods less vividly realised than at others in the general spirit and prac-

* See *(inter alia)* the Appendix to a Visitation Sermon entitled a 'Call to Union,' preached by Dr. Hook. Rivingtons', 1838.

tice of the members of the Church. But this is equally undeniable of other, even more vital and essential truths, as, for example, the doctrine of justification; and cannot, therefore, form a ground of legitimate objection to the present argument.

7. Lastly, it is the greatest possible error to suppose that the teaching of these doctrines in the present day is peculiar to certain pious and learned individuals in the University of Oxford, of whom it has been alleged that their reaction from the religious peculiarities of the day has engendered in them an inclination, if not to the entire scheme of Romanism, yet to Romish doctrines and practices, and a corresponding spirit. Now the reading and casual observation of any man interested in these subjects, ought to enable him sufficiently to confute such a charge. The reader will find, in an Appendix to this Chapter,* testimonies to this effect, very far, indeed, I have no doubt, from what more competent authorities could supply, but such as a very limited knowledge has enabled me to furnish from recently published works. I have cited the testimonies of several classes: first, of bishops and clergymen of the Church, taking care rigidly to exclude the name of every one connected, even by the remotest implication, with those writers at Oxford, to whom such frequent allusion has of late been made; and including none but such as are known to be eminent in station, or in ability and learning, or in zeal and

* See Appendix B.

judgment, or in most or all of these. But not contented with impartial voices, I have even looked for what some might call hostile testimony: the writings of men of eminence, well known to the world or in high official positions, who have recently published for the very purpose of discountenancing approximations to Romanism, in some cases of objecting specifically to tenets of the writers at Oxford; yet who yield a consenting witness against those who decry the notion of authority in the Church and of succession in the ministry. And I am bound to add that, so far as my own knowledge and experience go, I believe that it would be quite impossible to produce any such list of testimonies in support of the opposite opinions, or indeed any testimonies deserving the name, from writers of the Church of England. Then I have resorted to the published opinions of laymen, in order to show the acknowledgment substantially yielded to these principles in unprofessional and independent quarters; and lastly, I have cited the evidence of some few among those persons, who, like the early Puritans, are entirely agreed with us as to the fact, that the Church of England holds thus and thus; while they select for blame that in which we find food and solace, and admonition to humility and charity. The injurious effects which have followed from handing down ancient and Catholic principles as the mere opinions of a few individuals, must be the excuse for these citations; and it will be borne in mind that I adduce them, not to show that the principles are Catholic, or that

they are those of the Church in England, but to prove that they are at least not peculiar to a class or school of writers. So much by way of introduction to the argument.

SECTION II.—FIRST OBJECTION.

8—10. Objection of tendency to Romanism one of equivocal merit. 11, 12. Substantially the reverse of the truth. 13—19. Grounds of sympathy with the Roman Churches. 20—28. Prospects of Romanism. 29—36. One of the causes unfavourable to it. 37—39. Its features where paramount, and in Northern Germany. 40—48. Another striking proof and cause of weakness in Romanism. 49—66. Comparison of the working of the Reformation in England, and of the unreformed system in France. 67—72. Safeguards against Romanism. 73—75. Of learning from and of dealing justly by it.

8. I now come to consider the first of the three heads of charge to which I have referred; namely, that there is in Church principles a tendency to Romanism. There is an extraordinary levity in the temper with which this charge is sometimes bandied to and fro. A well-known Presbyterian clergyman,* of Edinburgh, charges an eminent lawyer, of the same communion, with holding "Popish notions" on the authority and functions of presbyteries, synods, and general assemblies, advocating for himself what are considered the most popular principles. But the eminent lawyer had been beforehand with his adver-

* A Letter to John Hope, Esq., Dean of Faculty, by William Cunningham, Minister of Trinity College Parish, on the Present Claims of the Church of Scotland. Edinburgh, 1839—p. 18.

sary,* and had already denounced as conformable to the opinions of the present titular Archbishop of Tuam, a statement of the functions of the clerical order, which, according to the view of the minister, accurately expressed the Presbyterian doctrine: and his defence is, that he does believe Dr. M'Hale would concur in the statement, "but it does not follow from this that there is anything distinctively Popish about it." He has courage to avow and stand to the sentiment in spite of the alarming designation: and much more ought the members of the Church of England by this time to have become, not indeed callous to such a charge, but extremely suspicious of its grounds; since they know it to be one which has been incessantly aimed at their venerable mother ever since the time when she began to be the most formidable, because the most Catholic, among all the opponents of what is specific and corrupt in Romanism. Not only her rites and discipline have some resemblance to those of the Romish Churches, but her liturgy and offices: and not only her liturgy and offices have some relationship to Rome, but the cardinal doctrines which they are intended to illustrate, and which are held for the most part by those who make the charge, are held in the very same form and language in which Rome herself, thanks to the divine mercy, receives them; and therefore, if the invidious epithet raises a presumption

* Letter to the Lord Chancellor on the Present Claims of the Church of Scotland, by John Hope, Esq., Dean of Faculty. Edinburgh, and London, 1839—p. 32.

against the first, it must tell with greatly increased force upon the latter.

9. In that mysterious phenomenon of the Christian period, the papal scheme, we must expect to find that subtle mixture of the precious and the vile, which Luther so well discerned when he wrote that the precinct of the Church of his own day, wherein the abomination stood, was, nay more, was thereby proved to be, nothing less than the holy place, the terrestrial habitation of the Holy Ghost. And was our Lord insensible to the Jewish corruptions because he recognised in full the authority of the unworthy rulers who sat in the seat of Moses? * And was Saint Paul disposed to deal lightly with truth, and to compromise the strongest doctrines of the Gospel, because he, at even a much later stage of the obduracy of his countrymen, acknowledged in Ananias the High Priest "the ruler of his people?" † No, but it was because they saw the traces of divinity in the degenerate system and its corrupted administrators, that the Redeemer poured out his soul in tears over the doomed Jerusalem, that the great Apostle could wish himself accursed from Christ for his brethren's sake. That which gives an interest to Romanism, is that which gives an interest to human nature at large: "the excess of glory obscured," the lingering grandeur of its origin, illustrates the greatness of its fall: and they who see that to Rome has once pertained "much every way" of the gifts of Christ, saints and martyrs without num-

* Saint Matthew xxiii. 1, 2. † Acts xxiii. 5.

ber, hard-fought conflicts for the faith against its corruptors not less than its oppressors, the faithful custody of the Word, the succession of a lawfully-commissioned ministry, the guardianship of reviving freedom and civilisation; they more than all besides, must weep tears of bitterness over her obstinate and mysterious infatuation. There is, in truth, in the Roman Catholic Church a juxtaposition so close and a mixture so intimate of the palpable elements of darkness with the no less clear elements of light, as might well stagger the human understanding, were it not that each of us, if he perform with searching fidelity the task of self-examination, may find within his own bosom the miniature, perhaps but partially, perhaps too glaringly discernible, of that gigantic and profound enigma.

10. But the fact of resemblance to something found to be comprised in a system so strangely compounded of opposing, and one might have said incompatible ingredients, cannot indeed be an unmeaning or an unimportant fact: it must have a meaning either of good or of evil; and which designation may be the one deserved, can only be determined to the satisfaction of an impartial mind by an examination of the points of resemblance upon their own merits. No presumption of any force can be raised, either the one way or the other. Inquiry alone can show us, whether the resemblance be to that which is Catholic in the Papal Church, or to that which is Romish.

Were the religion of Rome an accumulation of unmixed evil, the mere revulsion from it would be a safe,

indeed, though still a secondary principle of action. Avoidance of sin, comprehensive as is the meaning of the phrase, is still an inadequate and partial expression of a Christian's law of duty; and, in like manner, simple recoil from a false religion would leave us but imperfectly possessed with those positive qualities of truth, without which mere negations, however accurate, are utterly unfruitful. But, since the profession of Roman Catholics is a mixed system, and one of a most artful mixture, if we are weak enough to adopt contrariety to their belief as in any degree a law of our own, we are as likely, or more likely, to be repelled from truth into error, than from error into truth.

11. I am willing, however, to admit that Church principles, like all other truths, as they are subjectively entertained in the human mind, lie upon the verge of their correlative errors. Truth, at the best, is but imperfectly perceived by our feeble organs: even the inspired Apostle declared of the condition of Christians, "for now we see through a glass, darkly."* By disregarding its analogy, and by separating its parts, we may convert it into practical falsehood. Adhering to some unjustly disputed and depreciated tenet, with a fondness stimulated by opposition, we may grow morbid in its contemplation, may exaggerate its importance, may carry it to unwarranted extremes, and so lose its wholesomeness; or, keen in the re-development of some principle which the fleeting

* 2 Cor. xiii. 12.

fashions of the day have allowed to slumber for a little, we are apt to regard it with Promethean pride, the pride of imaginary creation; to mix in its advocacy a tincture of at the least unconscious egoism, and virtually to act upon the great principle of heresy; to subordinate revelation to ourselves, instead of yielding up ourselves to revelation; or, lastly, irritation with those who heap unfounded accusations may lead the accused finally to verify the charge, which, at its first birth, was ungrounded. On all these accounts, I am far from depreciating the exercise of a constant and jealous supervision upon the inculcation of Church principles. To exceed in vigilance, is to err on the safe side; harshness in the office is not to be resented or severely judged; let the dangers arising out of the associative tendency of the human mind, and they are considerable, be thoroughly explained; only let this be done impartially, with reference to all forms of self-deception, not to one only; and, above all, let the process always be grounded on and concluded by not what is secondary but what is primary, namely, by a just examination of each case upon its intrinsic merits.

I trust that there is nothing in these remarks indicative of a desire to make covert approaches towards an unavowed object; and that I may now proceed without suspicion to a less narrow and more general view of the subject.

12. It is altogether erroneous to suppose that the specific operation of Church principles, of that, for example, respecting Catholic tradition, is favourable to Romanism, farther than where Romanism may happen

to have retained the livelier contemplation of some truth partially dormant among ourselves. Is it, then, a guilty supposition, that there may be truths, of which this is to be affirmed? Surely it requires the extremest fury of debate, the thickest blindness of partisanship, to hold it certain, or even probable, that, in a controversy of immense range, waged upon a common ground of revelation, and lying between beings subject alike on either part to the frail conditions of humanity, the absolute truth on every topic is wholly on the one side, and the absolute falsehood on the other. But to revert to particulars. The Church principle places Catholic tradition generally in competition not with Scripture, but with private interpretations of Scripture; and assigns to it, in proportion as it approaches less or more to demonstrated universality, a qualified or a decisive superiority over individual or local judgment. Nothing has been so largely used against Romanism by Anglican divines as the body and the elements of Catholic tradition. Jewel was no idolater of Church principles, he has even been accused of handling them weakly and insufficiently; yet the import of his celebrated challenge to the Romanists was neither more nor less than a distinct appeal to the test of catholic or universal tradition; and if it may be allowed to instance one or two particular cases, I would, by way of example, propose the following:—If Saint Augustine declares that the essential sacraments of the Church are two,* is this not material and weighty evidence against the allegation of the Romanists that other

* S. Aug. de Symbolo, and Expos. in Ev. Joannis.

rites also are proved, by the evidence of tradition, to be sacramentally necessary for all Christians? Again, the claim of the Pope to the universal allegiance of Christendom is mainly grounded by its advocates on their own interpretation of a particular text (Thou art Peter,* &c.), which they allege as Catholic. Is it, in answer to such reasoning, of no advantage to show that, according to a vast body of fathers of the Church, including Saint Chrysostom and Saint Augustine,† the rock on which the Church was founded was faith in Christ, the Son of God, and not the mere person of the Apostle; or, that the clause was one received in various interpretations, which is equally conclusive against enforcing any one as matter of faith?

13. After these hints, intended to awaken a suspicion of the shallow notion to which they refer, it next comes to be observed, that undoubtedly Church principles do tend to lay certain grounds of sympathy with (among others) the churches still receiving the authority of the Pope, of which, without those principles, we could not have the advantage; for an advantage undoubtedly it is, as may be fearlessly

* Matt. xvi. 18. S. Aug. Retract. i. 26.

† The reply on the part of the Romanists may be seen in the Appendix to a sermon preached at Rome, by Dr. Baggs, in 1836, and translated and published, with high commendations there, under the title of Discorso intorno al primato de' Romani Pontifici, detto in Inglese nella Chiesa di Gesù e Maria, &c., 1838. A powerful and compendious statement of the discrepancies between Romanism and primitive testimony may be found in Dr. Hook's Sermon, on the Novelties of Romanism, London, 1839, pp. 19, et seqq. The same topic is handled with the greatest ability in Newman's Lectures on the Prophetical Office of the Church, sect. ii.

avowed in the sight of God and man, to find the cause and the material of sympathy with any of our Christian brethren, when it is realised, not at the expense, but on the contrary in and by the actual development of truth. These grounds, as they appear to me, are mainly the following.

14. First: that we find in them the essentials of a Church—the profession of the articles of the Christian Faith, which corresponds to the declaration of the pure word of God in the English Articles,* and the authorised administration of the Sacraments, which is likewise there required. It is not, indeed, without material explanations that we can affirm either the one or the other of these propositions. If the Roman Church has retained† without admixture the Holy Scriptures, she has propounded together with them unauthorised and corrupt additions. If her ministers give the sacraments to her children with lawful authority, yet they have mutilated the scriptural institution of the Eucharist by the subtraction of one of the elements from the laity. Undoubtedly the more holy and authentic the original framework of the Roman Church, the more fearful is the responsibility which such audacious innovations as hers imply; but here is the practical consolation which we may derive from recognising the validity of her apostolical commission: we have

* Art. xix.

† In respect of the Apocryphal books, their admission is rather, I suppose, a matter of opinion, on which either side may be innocently held, than one affecting faith. The argument may be seen in Bossuet's correspondence with Leibnitz concerning a reunion of Churches.

thereby the assurance, that all those members of her communion who hold in sincerity and in holy obedience the faith which she teaches, and who have been kept by Divine grace from the snares with which she has surrounded it, are not abandoned to any merely speculative and hypothetical claim on God's uncovenanted mercies, but are under His living covenant, are assured members of the body of Christ, are habitually and certainly fed with the blessed Sacraments.

15. Secondly: we may learn, from an impartial contemplation of the state of the Roman communion, very highly to value the salutary power of Church principles and organisation. We must not refuse the instruction, however unpalatable it may be, which is to be derived from comparing the corruptions of Rome with those of her adversaries, of the classes of Christians who have been originally driven from her communion on account of those very corruptions. Is it not a fact that all the Roman churches, without exception, have remained in the constant profession of those essential doctrines which are incorporated in the early creeds? Is it not equally beyond dispute, that these very doctrines, that Jesus Christ in His Godhead and His manhood, the foundation and the corner-stone, the alpha and the omega of Christianity, has been denied in places and by the followers of men once claiming to be known only by their greater zeal for the honour of His name, and for the purity of His faith? Is there no significancy in such facts as these?

Are phenomena so extraordinary wholly without a cause? Zealous reformation of abuses terminating in denial of the faith; obstinate adherence to them, always coexisting with an unwavering profession of the faith. State as you will, overcharge if you will, the number, the nature, the deep inveteracy of these abuses, the mystery is but deepened—the question does but recur with accumulated force, "is there not a cause?" And what is the cause other than this—that Rome has retained the witness of Apostolical Succession, the sound principle of Catholic consent; and although she may have disregarded the one by Papal domination, and have exaggerated and perverted the other into a doctrine of her own infallibility, yet the virtue of these truths is not wholly extinguished or expelled: by them she keeps her hold on those immortal creeds to which Catholic consent has yielded its fullest testimony, and which have never for a length of time been questioned or denied by any considerable portion of the Christian bodies having the Episcopal succession. And the more strongly we may argue that the grossness of the Roman abuses is such as naturally tends to the utter nullification of Christianity, so much the more of value and of salutary power must we ascribe to the blessed instrumentality of those Church principles, by which the disastrous result appears to have been intercepted and warded off.

16. Again: it is impossible, consistently with fairness, to refuse the acknowledgment, that the Church

of Rome gives, at least in terms, a full recognition to the essential idea of a permanent, independent, objective truth in religion. The spirit of philosophical speculation has dealt with Christianity sometimes as a thing purely relative and subjective, and has pretended to apply to it processes of the most arbitrary and unlimited reconstruction. That which philosophism does by false reasoning, sectarianism does by sheer and blind assumption, and lays all Scripture at the feet of every individual man to be moulded according to the crudities of his own fancy: an evil limited, indeed, or averted by humble piety where it exists; but men in the mass do not bring this qualification to the work: an evil, moreover, denied upon the plea that Scripture is acknowledged as an infallible teacher; but no security is thus afforded, for it is a teacher that is dumb, and cannot remonstrate with the taught. Amidst the fluctuations and the discords which belong to the operation of these principles, who can refuse to acknowledge the importance of every conspicuous acknowledgment of the faith as something given from God, palpable, entire; authoritative, whether we will hear or whether we will forbear; independent of us, while we depend upon it; permanent and changeless, while we oscillate to and fro, by the unshaken promise of its Author? It is true, indeed, that the Roman Church, while asserting the unalterable oneness of the faith, allows herself, under cover of the tenet of infallibility, an unbounded licence of innovation, and applies the seal of that in-

violability (which in theory she claims on behalf of revealed truth) to matter unauthorised and false: but if she gives us a salutary lesson in the firm inculcation of a true principle, we must not defraud her of her due, because she is not equally faithful in giving it effect, and because we may, and do painfully, fear that in affixing to the spurious the token of the genuine, she has with many brought both together into discredit.

17. Lastly, we appear to find in the Roman Church a provision which, if it be there in immense excess, is elsewhere not only in defect, but in such disrepute as threatens its utter renunciation; a provision for employing in religion the aid of the power of symbols, which recognises the mixed nature of man as a being compounded of body, soul, and spirit, and meets that mixed nature in all its faculties, supplying each with its appropriate food. It is very singular to observe how many of the pious among us actually seem to have forgotten that this body and its organs are portions of our proper selves. Rightly rejecting the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eye, and all that tends to the supremacy of sense in the lives of unthinking men, they rush into some capricious extreme, and regard the body as if it had little more of a permanent relation to themselves than the very clothes that cover it. Hence it seems to us strange to be told, that the body is a fit subject of Christian discipline, in its own mode and measure, as well as the immaterial man. Hence we are apt to treat the respect shown to the

remains of the dead as a tribute only to the memory of one who must doubtless have carried away from earth with him some fraction at least of human love, or as a security against making light of a subject so awful as death: but surely we ought rather to regard even the stark and breathless corpse as the subject of respect and of a present and a future interest—present, inasmuch as in it the deceased is paying, as we hope, the sole remaining forfeit of a sinful but ransomed nature; and future, inasmuch as that "*frale*," (according to the touching phrase of the Italians,) that dust returning to the dust, is part and parcel of the very humanity redeemed by Christ, part and parcel of the object of His love, and worthy therefore surely of ours. Hence it is that we scarcely understand why the resurrection of the body should have been so prominent a subject of the earliest controversies,* should have been secured from question by insertion in the earliest creeds, or should be declared, as it is by St. Augustine,† *summa fidei nostræ, quæ separat ab infidelibus.*

18. If, again, we look to the Scriptures of the New Testament, we find them abounding with these symbolical provisions, in a manner quite distinct from that of the older dispensation, where everything was type. Thus the Sacraments, and the solemn and sacramental rite of ordination, have each their proper signs established by the authority of Christ, and these not

* Even from the date of the First Epistle to the Corinthians. See ch. xv.

† De Symbolo, ii. 11.

merely appended to but incorporated in them. The descent of the Holy Ghost at His baptism, His transfiguration, the earthquake and the rending of the veil at His death, were exemplifications of the same provision. When He endowed the Apostles with the gift of the Spirit, "He breathed on them;"* when He would give them an emphatic lesson of humility, He founded it on the instructively symbolical action of washing their feet with His own sacred hands;† when He would give sight to the man blind from his birth, He made clay and with it anointed his eyes;‡ when the Holy Ghost descended on the day of Pentecost, He came under the appropriate sign of fire;§ when the miraculous gifts were to be employed for the recovery of the sick, they were to be anointed "with oil in the name of the Lord."‖ The Apostles were commanded, in departing from houses and cities which rejected their mission, to shake the dust off their feet. This they literally obeyed at Antioch of Pisidia.¶ At Corinth, St. Paul, in quitting the Jews, "shook his raiment."** At Lycaonia, when he and Barnabas addressed the people to dissuade them from offering worship and sacrifice, Paul and Barnabas "rent their clothes."†† Indeed, the miracles themselves at large may be regarded as symbols also, and not only proofs. It may be said, on the other hand, that these northern countries do not equally require such

* John xx. 22. † Ib. xiii. 2—16. ‡ Ib. ix. 1—7.
§ Acts ii. 3. ‖ James v. 14, 15. ¶ Acts xiii. 51.
** Ib. xviii. 6. †† Ib. xiv. 14.

aids. True: but first, this affects the degree and not the principle; secondly, it should remind us, in judging for nations of a different temperament, not to lay down for them rules only applicable to our own.

19. With these Scriptural authorities for the general principle of employing symbols, it is quite unnecessary to attempt its philosophical examination. Indeed, it commends itself to the unprejudiced, unsophisticated apprehension of men by its obvious good sense. If it has been ordained that the senses shall be the channels of a large part of our perceptions, why should we not make them monitors of heavenly truth, instead of leaving their avenues to be occupied exclusively by things mischievous, things secular, or things indifferent? We never surely can suppose that God has given to our nature faculties which are not capable of ministering to His glory; and if by excluding any of them from our view we make that culture partial which He intended to be universal, we shall in that measure mar the proportions and detract from the perfection to which redeemed man, the work of His renewing power, should otherwise attain. True, indeed, that the very same law which bids us to consider and provide for all the faculties of man, and to extract from each its appropriate service, binds us likewise to restrain every one of them within its own province, and to limit the provision to the scope and degree of that faculty for which it is intended, and reclaims against the usurpations of the senses even more than against their exclusion; against commit-

ting to them the functions of the intellect, even more than against appealing to the intellect alone: but that against which it most of all reclaims is this,—against the whole principle of making the observance of one duty an excuse for the infraction of another. Therefore, while deploring that tendency to absorb the higher parts of religion in sense, which we may think many of the practices of the Roman churches calculated to encourage, we ought for the truth's sake to find a ground of sympathy with them in this, that their principle is sound, and must be acknowledged to be such in proportion as we attain to more and more comprehensive views of the corporeal nature in which we have been fashioned, of the subtle connection between soul and flesh, and of the glory communicated by Christ to the destinies of the meaner as well as of the nobler element of our composition.

20. Thus then it appears that there are some leading features in the condition of the Roman churches from which we may derive lessons of importance, and these not only of caution but of imitation. I rejoice that it does not belong to me to trace out the darker side of the picture, to frame a catalogue of the warnings which they ought to afford us. We must, however, recollect that the papal rule has again begun to vaunt its triumphs among us, and that its adherents appeal with exultation to statements of its recent progress,* which have been put forth by some of the

* It appears from a statement in the 'Ecclesiastical Gazette,' that according to their proportion of marriages as returned to Parliament

friends of Protestantism under the influence of an alarm, justifiable, indeed, and but too well warranted if the Church had nothing to oppose to the inroad except the licentious and fluctuating theology of private judgment, but greatly beyond the real danger. To these, however, we are directed as to evidence of the most credible description, as the confessions of competent and moreover reluctant witnesses, by the papal organs.

21. It is indeed probably true that the political discords and the organic changes of late years in our civil regimen, which had formerly presented to the world's eye the promise of greater permanency, have aroused into life and activity all the principles, of whatever kind, dormant in our social system, which were hostile to the constitution, whether in the Church or the State. I do not mistake occasions for causes; but in public events we are, without doubt, to recognise the occasion which has stimulated not only Romanism but Protestant dissent, and not only these, but the revolutionary furies of Socialism and Chartism, into their present state of convulsive activity and effort. The same tendencies to political license and to innovation, which have given encouragement to Romanism where it was depressed, have alarmed it where it was in the ascendant. In Belgium, its bishops having succeeded in throwing off the yoke of Holland, have formally protested against toleration.

in 1839, the members of the Church of Rome in England are not more than 230,000. On account of immigration we ought perhaps nearly to double this number.

In France, schisms, both social, as that of the Saint Simonians, and religious, as that of *La Nouvelle Eglise Catholique*, have been spawned by the excitement of the times: and even the movements of Protestantism, far from a healthy plant in that country at the present time, are alleged to be regarded by the prelacy with considerable alarm. If little of actual dissent, as compared with the population, has been realised, we are to recollect how wide is the region of an icy indifference, how narrow the precinct, if the best sons of France may be believed, of actual and vigorous belief of whatever description. Ask of the papal court whether the prospects of the Church are satisfactory in Portugal and in Spain. Let the state of these European countries, the only ones where Romanism is the prevailing religion, and where also political movements, of a description hostile to the established order, have taken effect, determine the inquiry how far the progress of that system in England is a pure resumption of its ancient sway over the heart and mind of the country, and how far, on the other hand, that limited portion of the alleged increase, which is not ascribable to sheer immigration from Ireland, is more than the natural result of that increased activity which it has derived from the galvanic impulse of some great political changes. Examine the relations of the Church with the State in the only great empire which as such still professes allegiance to the faith of Rome, namely, Austria, and see whether they indicate on the part of the former the vigour of

a renovated youth. And why should we not at once appeal to the highest authority, the encyclical letter of the present Pope, Gregory XVI., published in the year 1832, where with one unvarying strain of complaints, fears, and deprecations, he sets forth the perils with which the Church of Rome is menaced by the spirit and events of the times.

22. But whether the amount of apprehension which we ought to feel of an extensive religious reaction in favour of Romanism be great or small, there is matter enough to recommend the most serious consideration in the fact that, at one period, a much greater proportion of Europe had embraced the Reformation, than at this moment adheres to its doctrines.* Even Spain and Italy numbered their thousands upon thousands of proselytes: and the Huguenots were supposed at least equally to divide France. But it may be said cruel persecution absolutely extirpated Reformation in the two first countries: massacre and war in the third. Even admitting this plea (which is far, however, from affording a full explanation of the case of France), yet Belgium and Poland, not very long after the middle of the sixteenth century, contained a majority of Protestants. Where are they? "In Austria, it has been said," writes Mr. Hallam,† "that not more than one-thirtieth part of the people continued firm in their original faith. This may probably be exaggerated; but

* Mac Crie's Account of the Reformation in Spain and in Italy (for those countries); Ranke's History of the Popes of the 16th and 17th Centuries, vol. ii.; Hallam's Literature of Europe in the 15th, 16th, and 17th Centuries, vol. ii. chap. ii. § 1-16.

† Literature, vol ii. 281.

a Venetian ambassador in 1558 (and the reports of the envoys of that republic are remarkable for their judiciousness and accuracy) estimated the Catholics of the German empire at only one-tenth of the population." What were the causes of this astounding re-action? Not force alone, for the greater strength it appears was with the reformed religion: but the improved discipline and secluded education of the clergy, the reform and revived severities of the monastic orders, the establishment of the Jesuits, the rekindling of a fervent and concentrated zeal for the Church, are assigned as additional causes by the able and accomplished historian. At least the fact is one which tells like a battering-ram upon the fortress of our pride; one which must, I think, shake to atoms our confidence in that disjointed and inefficient warfare, which alone mere Protestantism is able to carry on against the old corruptions; and must set us upon seriously inquiring, whether those embers of life yet glowing in the Roman system, whose power was displayed in her extremest need, and was found equal to so terrible an emergency, are elements foreign to the nature of that Reformed Church of England which we believed to have abandoned in its reformation, much, indeed, of its accretions, but nothing of its essence.

23. Indeed the spirit of charity must lead the receivers of strong Church principles to wish with the deepest fervour that regard to truth allowed them to think so favourably of the Roman Church as they have been largely accused of doing. Alas! in all its whole aspects but one, Church history is a sad humi-

liating tale: every side of it, but that which contemplates the purposes and operations of God, is but a new proof of the inveterate sinfulness that is in us, and its course is an ever varied exemplification of the earthiness of those vessels in which the heavenly treasure is contained. But something at least is gained, if we have learned thereby the elementary and preliminary lesson of approaching the subject in the spirit of modesty and of true affection towards our brethren, as well as of a concern for truth paramount to every consideration that might lead us to study methods of sparing our vanity or indulging our partisanship; and let us depend upon it, that it is a more wholesome discipline for us who are Protestants, and more conducive to our spiritual nourishment, thoroughly to explain the dangers of our own position, and impartially to allow our faults, than to gloss them over for the purpose of gloating on the long catalogue of evils which the repudiated system unhappily presents; to remove the beam from our own eye, before we remove even the beam, much less the mote, from that of our brother: and both in individuals and communities do I believe that jealous self-scrutiny, free and ample confession, and sharp censure of our own delinquencies, are not only most befitting our human infirmity and sin, but are the best criterion of a real strength, the most hopeful signs of a capacity to attain to truth by undergoing her discipline.

24. There can be no doubt that the reconversion of England is intensely desired by the central authorities of the Roman Church. Their proselyte, Mr.

Spencer, labours by speech and writing, to make known the fact. Even the fluctuations of theological opinion among us, are accurately watched. A discourse was delivered before the college *de Propagandâ Fide*, by the able person who was rector of the English College in Rome, Dr. Wiseman, in 1838, on this very subject, which excited the liveliest interest, and was printed* by command of the reigning Pope. Sometimes the language of their organs in regard to what I have termed Church principles among us, would represent their progress as favouring the advances of Romanism; but I apprehend that the more esoteric opinions of the ablest men are very different: they know that the very same reasons which make the Church of England, as a mass, the great bulwark of the Reformation, or, as I have seen it expressed, "il capo dello scisma," more formidable by far than any of those bodies which do not possess the true centre of a Church-life in the Episcopal succession, must also make her an obstacle still more and more effectual to their own designs, in proportion as she more and more fully develops the actual principles of her constitution.

25. But, indeed, this is not the first time that there has been a sanguine anticipation of the reconversion of England. In an Italian account of the foundation of the English College in Rome, it is stated that under James I. there was a similar and very confi-

* I happened to be in Rome very shortly afterwards, and made many efforts to procure this discourse, but in vain. It was printed, but not published. I could only hear of one Englishman who had seen it.

dent expectation: not apparently having reference to any of the points then controverted within the Anglican communion, but rather perhaps to actual or expected relaxations in the administration at least of the penal laws; and it is curious to find Filicaja, a poet apparently of a gentle spirit, lamenting, in such terms as follow, the continued apostacy of England from the papal rule, and invoking the arms of continental Europe to reduce her to obedience :—

> Ma, nonsia l'odio tal, nè sì ti punga
> Quel tuo sfrenato di regnar desire
> Che immedicata e guasta
> Parte di te sì vasta
> Tu lasci. Al termin d'empietà sì lunga
> Ben tempo è omai che giunga
> L'Anglia, e non più su i profanati campi
> Orma d'infamia e d' abominio stampi.
> Tempo è che torni a rifiorir sul soglio
> Quel che, al Tamigi in riva,
> Spuntò poc anzi di pietà germoglio.*

Urban VIII., in the reign of Charles I.,† actually entertained the project of conquering the British isles: I conclude, by the aid of supposed or expected converts. Nay, at a later period, which bears the character of torpor and indifference rather than of any undue tendency towards superstition, the Confessional‡ of Archdeacon Blackburn reports "the great and alarming increase of Popery in these kingdoms," and the suspicions of competent observers that the Church of England was "edging back once more towards Popery." John Wesley was vehemently accused of

* Canzone, All 'Europa.
† Hallam, Lit. of Europe, vol. iii. p. 47.
‡ Pp. 289, 290.

Popery.* Dr. Doddridge, in his Correspondence, expresses considerable alarm on account of its progress. In 1734 such was the apprehenson felt in the Dissenting body, that the leading ministers combined to preach a series of sermons against Romanism.† And Archbishop Secker writes, in a letter dated 1736, "The emissaries of the Romish Church, taking the members of ours at this disadvantage, have begun to reap great harvests in the field which hath been thus prepared for them by those who would be thought their most irreconcileable enemies."‡

26. Vain dream, issued from the ivory gates, and, if in anything anticipation of the future may be allowed to our short-sightedness, far, immeasurably far from fulfilment! Not less vain, but even more, if it contemplate a triumph through the instrumentality of pure persuasion, than if its promise be the martial subjugation of the country. Other sentiments and principles than those with which papal dominion is compatible, have struck their roots and their ten thousand fibres through the breadth and the depth of the national character,—our moral soil. England, which, with ill grace and ceaseless efforts at remonstrance, endured the yoke when Rome was in her zenith,§ and when the powers of thought were but here and there evoked, will the same England, afraid of the truth which she has vindicated, or even of the license which has mingled like a weed with its growth, recur to that

* Enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists compared, Part ii., Appendix, p. 145, and Preface to Part iii.

† Toulmin's Life of Neal. ‡ Works, Vol. i. Charge 1.

§ Cf. (*inter alia*) Coleridge, Table Talk, May 6, 1833, vol. ii. p. 170.

system in its decrepitude, which she repudiated in its vigour?

27. No; there is, however, a worse, which is also a less improbable alternative. The presumption of a shallow restlessness, which makes the individual mind the measure and criterion of the Faith; the headlong blindness of reaction from Papal abuse, which regards not where it stops; the relaxation of the social ties which knit together the community; the decay of all those secondary influences which in their joint effects were generally amicable to the preservation of at least a basis for stable religion; in short, everything of an unfavourable kind which is characteristic of the age, threatens us from an opposite direction, with the heavier calamity of the entire overthrow of religious belief, whatever temporary and incidental advantage it may appear to give to the re-establishment even of its more superstitious forms.

28. That truth of the Gospel, which, according to the belief of this nation, is held and exhibited in the Church, may, in the issue of the now subsisting conflict, be found too strong for its enemies, or may in any given place be mastered by them through the unfaithfulness of its adherents, though never from any other cause. The extraordinary increase of moral power and of full development of principle in the Church, may lead us to look with sanguine hope to the realisation of the former alternative. But if the Church shall fail to retain and to confirm her hold upon the heart of the nation, and to imbue it more pervasively with the life and spirit of the Gospel, by

what influences will she be worsted? Not by an undistinguishing repentance and a precipitate self-submission hurrying back to Romanism, but by that principle of religious insubordination and self-dependence which, if it refuse her tempered rule and succeed in its overthrow, will much more surely refuse, and much more easily succeed in resisting, the unequivocally arbitrary impositions of the Roman scheme.

29. The vital truths embodied in that scheme have power enough, as it would appear, under the present combination of circumstances, to prevent it from sinking below a certain level in Christendom: but the corrupt additions which are interwoven with them, and fetter their energies, have weight enough to prevent it from rising above that level. As it is a calumny, such as should choke the utterer, to say that there is in it no strength except that of the Satanic delusion that operates upon superstitious susceptibilities, so it requires the extreme of blindness or of boldness to deny, that it abounds likewise in special causes of internal weakness.

30. One great cause of moral weakness, however it may seem adapted to oblique and temporary purposes, I cannot but recognise in this; that while most of those doctrines which have given just offence are susceptible in the mouth of learned men of some kind of explanation or excuse, and may be entertained by the truly devoted heart in a form from which all the poison is extracted, yet they have in themselves that tendency to encourage exaggeration, which must

sometimes reach the most shocking extremes.* Now, great and just complaints have been made by Roman Catholics abroad of the hasty deductions and injurious reports of English travellers :† I admit that general inferences ought only to be drawn upon comprehensive knowledge ; but there are some facts which speak for themselves. The usual tone of preaching in a Christian country is, as I take it, with some allowances, not an inequitable measure of its relative advancement in true Christian knowledge : the pulpit, it has been said by Mr. Coleridge, indicates the anticipated sympathies of the people. It is to me matter of great consolation to believe that the general tone of preaching, at least in many Roman Catholic countries, and even in those where there is no inducement from the neighbourhood and competition of some form of Protestantism to mitigate or curtail the received dogmas, is much more Catholic than specifically Roman. I have heard many sermons in Italy and Sicily, of which the great majority have been such as would have commanded, at least with reference to their general tenor, the respect and assent of every tolerably candid member of the principal reformed

* In the language of Mr. Coleridge, Romanism holds certain opinions which have "a fatal facility of being degraded into base, corrupting, and even idolatrous practices."

† See, for instance, the Abbate Antonino De Luca's Preface to his translation of Dr. Machale's Sermons, Rome, 1832. It is not much to the purpose to say, that these complaints might be easily retaliated. See the account given by Theiner, in the interesting introduction to his Seminario, of his experience of the English Church, and the conclusion he draws thereupon. In consequence, however, of what has been said, I have felt it necessary to aim at being specific rather than copious or comprehensive.

communions. But, upon the other hand, my own ears have listened to sounds, accepted with intense admiration by crowded congregations, so fearful and appalling, that I do not dare to give them the names which they seemed to me to merit, and that I am convinced the high and pure minds of many persons included within the pale of the Roman Catholic Church, and devotedly attached to it, would regard with the same horror which they painfully awakened in myself. And this not in distant and obscure places, but in churches, for example, in the very centres of Naples and Messina. And not from obscure or ill-informed men, but from preachers of evidently considerable accomplishment, and conspicuous popularity. Once in particular, on the anniversary of the *Anime del Purgatorio;* and once on the dignity and attributes of the Virgin. Both were addressed to very crowded audiences. I subjoin at once the painful details, which a regard to truth forbids me to suppress.

31. The first named of these discourses was preached on the 2nd of November, 1838, in the Church of the Anime del Purgatorio, at Messina, by the Padre Cavallari. The preacher alluded to the gloom with which the day was invested by the Church, and said that he however would console his hearers by setting before them their great privilege in being allowed to succour those souls of the just, which though they had died in faith and merits, had not yet sufficiently expiated their sins, so that while the love of God yearned towards them, it could not take effect, inasmuch as his justice on the other hand bore them away to inflict the awful

pains which they were at that moment enduring. To the faithful on earth it is given to procure their release, which they are to do by means of prayers—of alms—and of masses: through these last there comes to the sufferers great relief during the time which they are said. According (as he stated) to Saint Jerome, at the moment when the Host is elevated, there is even an entire suspension of the pains of those on whose behalf the sacrifice is offered. Without any doubt or scruple, therefore, he would affirm, that the zeal of the Apostles of Christ, which was so much commended in the Church, and by which they preached the Gospel to the world, was a zeal far inferior to that of those who by such masses should procure the release of souls from purgatory. For those, to whom the Apostles preached, were men yet in their sins, of whom it was quite uncertain whether they could ultimately profit by the grace tendered them or not, or whether they were objects of the effectual and permanent love of God or not: but these are souls everlastingly redeemed and already holy, only waiting for the consummation of their holiness: as they then are infinitely more dear to God, so is it a far higher work to be concerned in their relief. And they, when liberated from torture and received by Christ into heaven, will retain especially, and first of all, their gratitude to those on earth who have been the means of their release, and will powerfully intercede for them, as he instanced by a number of temporal deliverances. By these reciprocal good offices the present is bound to the future, and life to death. Both then to testify against the blasphemies

of those who deny the purgatorial pains of the dead, and by their own most sacred interests, he conjured his hearers to avail themselves of the means in their hands. For his own part he would esteem the sharing in the liberation of a soul from purgatory his best assurance of his own eternal salvation. And he concluded with an invocation to these departed spirits to remember in their prayers the preacher Cavallari, who had on that day feebly endeavoured to plead their cause, as well as to care for the city of Messina. He had preached for some time with great vehemence and considerable power. A deep and half articulate amen broke from many of the auditory as he concluded: he descended from the pulpit in a state of exhaustion, and as he left its steps one of the congregation fell on his neck and kissed him with enthusiasm.

32. The second of the two sermons to which I have alluded, was preached in the church of San Ferdinando, at Naples, on Sunday afternoon, December the 2nd, 1838. The preacher who in this case also appeared to be a man of ability and popularity and (I think) a Franciscan Monk, chose for his subject the Divine Maternity of the Virgin. He described it as being morally of a highly mysterious character, and appeared obliquely to assimilate it to the Divine Paternity. This wonderful creature, he said, triumphed over the general laws of human nature as an exception from the taint of original sin: she was formed by the selection, as it were (like that of the painter of Agrigentum in an old tale) from all quarters of all the choicest elements of excellence; she is *regina de' cieli*, and *imperatrice*

del mondo: her virtue and glory differ, in this essential respect, from those of the angels and archangels, that their gifts are restrained within the bounds of what is finite, *i cancelli del finito*, while hers *toccano ai cancelli del infinito*, so that there can properly be no relation or comparison between them. In her are exhibited the several distinctive virtues of apostles, doctors, martyrs, virgins: in her are represented also those, which belong to the heavenly circles of cherubim and seraphim, of angels and archangels: nay more, and most of all, she is invested with the extrinsic attributes of the blessed Trinity, namely Infinite Power, Infinite Wisdom, and Infinite Love. Saint John in the Spirit saw our Lord on His throne, calling up His spouse to her throne by His side; this was the Virgin: and He set upon her head a crown adorned with lions, bears, and leopards, beasts emblematically representing the sinners whom she had saved. Her part in the redemption of the world was analogous to that of Eve in its destruction. Accordingly, he proceeded, let us go with confidence to her feet, and he was about to offer to her his concluding address, when with my companions I quitted the scene.

It may be right to add, that the above abstracts are nearly literal transcripts from notes made within a few hours after hearing these discourses, and when the echo of their periods had scarcely ceased to return upon my ear.

33. Indeed the reverence paid to the Virgin Mary generates a sentiment which, it must be feared, too

often hovers on the very verge of idolatry, and sometimes, as in the case that I have quoted, oversteps it.* Mere definitions which exclude that extreme of evil, are not enough: we cannot but ask, what is the practical view with which the Christian people are taught to regard her? If it be one fairly represented by the terms of the following prayer, we may perhaps become less credulous of the threats that England shall once again substitute such a form of religion for that which she now enjoys.

"In voi, o madre nostra, noi abbiamo collocate tutte le nostre speranze; siate voi la nostra via per andare a Gesù, e il mezzo per cui riceviamo tutte le grazie necessarie per conseguire la nostra eterna salute." And it proceeds to implore that the worshipper may die "col vostro dolcissimo nome sulle labbra e del vostro santissimo Figliuolo."

This prayer was (in the month of October, 1838), printed and posted for the popular use in the well-known and much frequented Church of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva, in Rome.† In another Roman Church I have seen a prayer with a passage to the following effect—one which affords ample subject matter for

* Mr. Hallam (Const. Hist. ch. ii.) says "those who have visited some Catholic temples, and attended to the current language of devotion, must have perceived, what the writings of apologists or decrees of councils will never enable them to discover, that the saints, but more especially the Virgin, are almost exclusively the *popular* deities of that religion."

† See also the Appendix to an admirable Sermon by the Rev. Lord Arthur Hervey, Rector of Ickworth, on the Errors of Popery. (Bury, 1838.)

meditation: Fatemi sapere la *dolcezza* del vostro cuore, e la vostra *forza* presso quello di Gesù.

34. The beautiful conception of the Virgin as affording the tenderness and intensity of feminine sympathies to be the medium of our communication with the transcendent glory of her Son, disguises a reality of infinite danger. It is the very reverse of the method taken with children, which hides bitter but wholesome drugs under some sweet confection:—

> Succhi amari ingannato ei beve,
> E dall' inganno suo vita riceve.*

For here poison is carried to our lips under an exterior the most attractive. The practical upshot, though I cannot believe it to be, even in the extremest case, the conscious intention of the whole, is, a tendency infinitely various in degree, but sometimes direct and absolute, to extrude our Saviour, in the view of the believer, from many or even from all of His redeeming functions, and to leave Him only in the stern unapproachable character of a Judge.† To her will, by

* Tasso Ger. Lib. i. 3.

† I quote as a specimen the following passage from Edmund Campian's "*Oratio de tutelâ et defensione B. Mariæ Virginis.*"—"Equidem videre mihi videor Christum Jesum, Filium Dei vivi, tot injuriis lacessitum, jamjam tela manu corripientem, atque vibrantem, quibus hanc progeniem tam diram tamque pestiferam feriat, comminuat, exterminet. Sed ex alterâ parte, divinissima ipsius Mater, Mater misericordiarum, maternis affectibus incitata, supplici rogatu pœnas intentantem continet: et coram Filio gratiâ plena genitrix provoluta, quotidie suspensionem vindictæ, dilationem ultionis, expectationem pœnitentiæ orat, obsecrat, obtestatur. 'Vide,' inquit, 'dilectissime Fili, palmas extensas, quæ infantulum contrectarunt, agnosce ubera quæ suxisti... profudisti.' His ille vocibus interpellatus, auditores, ictum paratum jam ac destinatum cohibet. Matremque purissimam contemplans, nihil tam grave tamve arduum æstimat, quod non hujus intercessioni libera-

some strange process, the effectuation of His coming is referred, as if it had been, not an instrument merely, but a cause.* The habitual communion with Him, into whose body we have been incorporated by Baptism, and who, through the medium of that body, becomes the sustenance of our daily life, is made to pass through the intervention of her person. The constant application of His blood and merits, whereby alone we can for a moment stand in the place of sons and realise the spirit of adoption, is exhibited as dependent on her prayers. to which we are to resort for habitual aid. In short she is practically exhibited as the way, and He as the truth and the life mainly or even alone approachable by that way. Hence it is that common devotion seems to revert naturally to her in a thousand secondary forms, where to us it would seem that the privileges of the covenant as well as the necessities of our condition carry us directly to the Redeemer. Hence it is an ordinary practice to

lissimè concedat, amantissimè remittat, clementissimè condonet, munificentissimè largiatur. Quid enim in illâ cœlesti curiâ, quid in illâ celsissimâ Dei majestate cogitari potest, quod non inflectat atque promoveat hujusce Virginis conspectus? quid in illâ sanctissimâ Trinitate potest concipi, quod non hujusce preces interventusque persuaserint?" I am not aware that this is beyond the usual strain.

* Hence that most objectionable note (taken from the Douay Version) on Gen. iii. 15. in the Scripture Extracts published by the Irish Board of National Education. "It shall crush, &c., *ipsa*, she, the woman: so divers of the fathers read this place conformably to the Latin: others read it *ipsum*, viz. the seed. The sense is the same: for it is by her seed Jesus Christ that the woman crushes the serpent's head." What other is the allegation, than this: to say Christ was the efficient cause of redemption, and to say the Virgin was the efficient cause of redemption, are virtually the same thing; the two propositions are equivalent.

sum up sermons,* the subject matter of which has had no reference to her, with a petition addressed to her. Hence that extraordinary passage in which the reigning Pontiff, at the close of his Encyclical letter, states the grand resource on which he relies against the actual and impending perils of the time.

"Sed ut omnia hæc prosperè ac feliciter eveniant, levemus oculos manusque ad sanctissimam Virginem Mariam, quæ sola universas hæreses interemit, nostraque maxima fiducia, imò tota ratio est spei nostræ."†

"But that all this may take prosperous and happy issue, let us lift our eyes and hands to the most holy Virgin Mary, who alone hath abolished all heresies, and who is our principal reliance, yea rather the entire ground of our hope."

35. As though all human sympathy were not absolute deadness in comparison with the exquisite sensibility of Him, whom "in all things it behoved to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest,"‡ "touched with the feeling of our infirmities,"§ "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." As though all human love were not shallowness itself, in comparison with the unexplored profoundness of those yearnings of affection, which with more power than superstition ever ascribed to magic charms, did draw down the sun of heaven from its throne, did clothe the very and eternal Word

* See for example the Second of the Five Sermons preached in Rome by Dr. Machale, p. 35 (Italian Translation). Rome, 1832.

† Encyclical Letter, dated from Rome, on the day of the Assumption, August, 1832, and republished separately in London.

‡ Heb. ii. 17. § Heb. iv. 15.

with "the form of a servant," with the "likeness of men," so that "He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."* As if the Maker of woman did not possess in inexhaustible abundance those treasures of tenderness, from out of whose overflow it is that He has adorned the loveliest of His works.

36. Now there is a weakness always inherent in tendencies to extravagant abuse. The abuse menaced in this instance is that of deep, nay of destructive superstition: and the proposition which I here advance is, that this is precisely the form of abuse which the temper of the present age is qualified upon the whole to detect and to expose, however blind it may be to perils and faults of an opposite and even of a worse description.

37. To observe the weakness of the Roman Church in the lands where it is still the authorised though perverted instrument of the Christian ministry, is no grateful task; and mainly for this reason, that where we find its peculiar influences on the wane, we do not, I fear, discover others of a less objectionable character ready to replace them. It seems as though the evils, in their unchecked operation, eat away the moral vigour of humanity, and left it exhausted and incapable of giving birth to any reorganising principle. When the system loses hold on the educated and the noble, and on the active and influential portion of the population, it throws them into total alienation from Christianity, whose truths they have only seen in

* Phil. ii. 7–9.

inseparable mixture with fiction and with servitude, and abandons them to licentiousness and unbelief, perhaps under the miserable compromise, rarely even under this, of an occasional conformity with the exterior observances of religion.

38. It has fallen out of harmony with the intellectual life of the countries where it is nominally in the ascendant, and the secret course of speculative minds in Italy, there is reason to fear, after they have revolted from the inordinate demands of the Church, verges towards that low materialism which is the last and most degraded form of unbelief. In the Peninsula, at least, the vast number of her adherents, the great temporal interests, the unbroken uniformity, the tenacity of the national character, and the extreme backwardness of education and of the general powers of thought, might still, one would have been inclined to anticipate, have rendered the Church, in the beautiful language of Mr. Canning,* "a signal of rallying to the combatant, and of shelter to the fallen." But no: her weight has been scarcely felt in the long depending scales of civil war—they have now, it seems, finally inclined to the side opposed to all her predilections: and the spoliation of her possessions, and the banishment of thousands of her ministers, has been effected with impunity by parties remaining thereafter undisturbed, at least by any influence of hers, in their possession of the powers of government.

* Speeches at Liverpool.

39. In Northern Germany, indeed, there has been of late years a display of vitality in the body adhering to the Pope, which is very considerably different from the other cases to which I have alluded. Amidst a highly civilised and intellectual people, without any legal advantages, or any political movements which have opened to them the prospect of possible pre-eminence and power, they confront undismayed the opposing ranks of Protestantism. In practice, I believe, they rather gain than lose proselytes; and the energy they have displayed during the recent struggles has been, to many not superficial observers, matter of the greatest astonishment. In controversy they are not wholly worsted. The writings of Möhler, one of their divines, on the unity of the Church, have drawn from the pen of a learned Protestant Professor (Rothe*) this marked testimony of approval:—"I never return to the book without joyful admiration of its genuine, fresh, and not less true than deep comprehension of the inward spirit of the primitive Church." The name of Görres, too, has received the high eulogies of Mr. Milman, in his History of Christianity. Where lies the secret of such comparative vigour but in this, that those with whom they have to contend have not yet realised that blessing for which the most illustrious men of Prussia daily yearn,—an Apostolical Church-organisation, together with the Reformed Faith? This analogy, combined with other evidence, will justify

* Anfänge, Vorrede.

us in ascribing any progress that Romanism may have made in this country, over and above what may be accounted for by immigration and by political causes, to the relaxation and neglect of true ecclesiastical principles among ourselves.

40. Even that subject which Bossuet has used with such extraordinary power against his controversial antagonists,—the subject of their variations,—is one capable of affording a formidable display of Romanish versatility. But the variations of Protestants had some excuse at least in the dizziness and fury of the times : during a gigantic reaction it was scarcely compatible with the common conditions of humanity, even if we make every assumption in their favour, but that, after having been swayed so far from the equilibrium of truth, the very effort necessary in order to regain it should be one, in the first instance, of indeterminate and irregular movement, which would itself require subsequent correction. And, besides, it has never been among the Reformers an object pursued with consummate art, to hide, by nice modifications of phraseology, the changes which they have made in their theological confessions. Let any one, however, compare that which was deliberately held against Luther, in the matter of indulgences, with the tone now commonly adopted in the Roman Catholic body : he will be amazed that the doctrines of infallibility and changelessness should have left "ample room and verge enough" for the application of such drastic reductions, and he will find that the state-

ments of the former period are such as, if now imputed, would be heavily complained of as a pure calumny of ignorant or angry controversialists.

41. Tetzel, Prior of the Dominicans, against whose sales of indulgences it was that Luther entered his first protest, taught the people, if I may rely upon a history which largely quotes his language, that "the very moment that the money clinks against the bottom of the chest, the soul escapes from purgatory, and flies free to heaven."* "The first benefit we announce," said the commissioners acting on their instructions, "is the complete pardon of all sins; and it is not possible to speak of any greater benefit than this, since man who lives in sin is deprived of the divine favour, and by this complete pardon he recovers the grace of God. Now we affirm that, to obtain these great blessings, it is only necessary to purchase an indulgence." * The letters of absolution contained these words:—"I remit the pains thou would'st have had to endure in purgatory. I receive thee again to the sacraments of the Church. I hereby reincorporate thee in the communion of the saints, and restore thee to the innocence and purity of thy baptism: so that, at the moment of death, the gate of the place of torments shall be shut against thee, and the gate of the paradise of joy shall be opened unto thee."* It would be easy to multiply, perhaps by others more aggravated, these quotations: and it will, I apprehend, be

* Merle d'Aubigné's History of the Reformation in Germany, Book iii.

found, that the reform decreed by the Council of Trent upon this important head went rather to checking and discouraging the practice of direct sale, than to any limitation of the enormous powers here asserted to belong spiritually to indulgences. Of such retractation I have not been able to discover any trace. But I come to the "Declaration of the Catholic (Roman) Bishops, Vicars Apostolic, and their coadjutors in Great Britain," published in May, 1826, and signed by nine names. And I find in the article on Indulgences,* that "an indulgence, in the sense of the Catholic Church, is no pardon for sin at all; it is only a remission of the whole or of a part of the temporal punishments, which the justice of God often reserves to be undergone by the sinner, after the guilt of the sin has been remitted."

42. Again let us consider for a moment the exposition which the admirable Fenelon has given of the principle on which the Roman authorities prohibit, as a general rule, the reading of the Scriptures to the laity, and permitted it only as an exception; where he ingenuously allows that the contrary practice prevailed and was approved in the early Church, but that the admitted change had become necessary on account of the extensive prevalence of heresy.

"Je crois qu'on s'est donné en nos jours une peine inutile pour prouver ce qui est incontestable, savoir, que les laïques lisoient les saintes écritures dans les

* Sect. vi. p. 12.

premiers siècles de l'Eglise. Pour s'en convaincre, il ne faut qu'ouvrir les livres de Saint Chrysostome: il dit, par exemple, dans sa préface sur l'épître aux Romains, qu'il ressent une vive douleur de ce que beaucoup de fidêles n'entendent pas Saint Paul comme il le faudroit, et de ce que l'ignorance de quelques uns va jusqu' à ne savoir pas le nombre de ses épîtres: il ajoute que ce désordre vient de ce qu'ils ne veulent pas avoir assidument ses écrits dans leurs mains: il ajoute que l'ignorance des saintes écritures est la source de la contagion des hérésies et de la négligence dans les mœurs. Ceux, dit il, qui ne tournent pas les yeux vers les rayons des écritures, tombent nécessairement dans des erreurs et dans des fautes fréquentes. Tout ce discours regarde les laïques qui écoutoient les sermons de ce pére."*

Again:—

"Dans les anciens temps, où le commun des fidêles etoit simple, docile, attaché aux instructions des pasteurs, on leur confioit le texte sacré, parcequ' on les voyoit solidement instruits, et préparés pour le lire avec fruit. Dans ces derniers temps, où on les a vus presomptueux, critiques, indociles, cherchant dans les écritures a se scandaliser contre elles, pour se jeter dans l'irréligion, ou tournant l'écriture contre les pasteurs, pour secouer le joug de l'église, on a été con-

* Lettre à M. L'Evêque d'Arras, p. 1. I quote from an edition published at Vienna in 1815, and sold at the Depository of the College *de Propagandâ Fide*, in Rome.

traint de leur défendre une lecture si salutaire en elle même, mais si dangereuse dans l'usage que beaucoup de laïques en faisoient."

43. The restrictive practice which he thus justifies, and which he individually joins with the recommendation to prepare the laity for the beneficial use of Scripture, was held much more rigorously by others; as for instance, by Gerson, the excellent and distinguished Cisalpine divine:—

" Il dit ailleurs qu'il faut empêcher la traduction des livres sacrés en langue vulgaire, principalement de nôtre Bible, excepté les moralités et les histoires."

And again:—

" Comme on peut tirer quelque bien d'une bonne et fidéle version de la Bible en François, si le lecteur l'entend avec sobriété; au contraire, il arrivera des erreurs et des maux innombrables si elle est mal traduite, ou expliquée avec presomption."

Even the translation of the missal into French was condemned. The bishops of France wrote thus to Alexander VII. in 1661:—

" Nous avons êté attentifs a cette nouveauté, et nous l'avons entièrement désapprouvée, comme contraire à la coutume de l'Eglise, et comme très pernicieuse aux âmes."

The Pope replied, condemning

— " la témérité de ceux qui avoient osé traduire dans la langue vulgaire, savoir, la Françoise, le missel romain pour le divulguer et le faire passer dans les mains des personnes de tout état et de tout sexe."

44. Heresy is now, surely, no whit less prevalent than it was in the days of Fenelon; but what say the Roman Bishops sent by the Pope to act as Vicars Apostolic in Great Britain, with their coadjutors, in their declaration of the year 1826:*—

"The Catholic Church has never forbidden or discouraged the reading or the circulation of authentic copies of the Sacred Scriptures, in the original languages. . . . As to translations of the Holy Scriptures into modern languages, the Catholic Church requires, that none should be put into the hands of the faithful, but such as are acknowledged by ecclesiastical authority to be accurate, and conformable to the sense of the originals. . . . The Catholics in England, of mature years, have permission to read authentic and approved translations of the Holy Scriptures, with explanatory notes."

I do not mean to say that there is a literal and absolute contradiction; but there is in spirit and in practical effect as true a contradiction as if it were written in express terms.

45. Again: in climes more remote, the assertion of the general liberty of reading the Scriptures is more boldly and largely made. At a meeting of the Roman Catholics of Australia, held on Sunday, the 14th of July, 1839, "in the Cathedral Church of St. Mary," under the presidency of their Bishop, and reported in a journal† specially connected with

* Sect. iii. pp. 7, 8.

† The Australian Chronicle, No. 1, Aug. 2, 1839.

that communion, one of the speakers, in moving a resolution, says of the motion which he is making—

"It affords me an opportunity of again publicly denying the truth of an accusation which a thousand times has been brought against us, and a thousand times proved to be unjust, and completely contrary to our well-known principles and practice; namely, that we are opposed to the reading of the Bible. Now I say that we are not opposed to the reading of the Bible—we are not opposed to the circulation of the Scriptures amongst our people, and in proof of this assertion I have only to appeal to this one fact, that the present Catholic Primate of Ireland, Dr. Crolly, has caused the Douay version of the Bible to be stereotyped, and to be sold at a very moderate price, for the sole purpose of enabling almost every Catholic to have a copy of the sacred volume."

46. Not only, however, is the doctrine of different times but of different places at utter variance upon cardinal principles of practice. As regards the great ethical and religious as well as political question of toleration, we have within the few last years seen the Belgian Bishops formally protesting against its legal establishment. Nay, more, let us hear once more the voice which unequivocally * alleges itself to be infallible in all matters of religion, and which claims the power of determining what is and what is not matter of reli-

* Les Affaires de Rome, vol. i. p. 174. (18mo.)

gion. The Pope, in his Encyclical Letter of August, 1832,* writes thus concerning toleration:—

"Atque ex hoc putidissimo indifferentissimi fonte, absurda illa fluit ac erronea sententia, seu potiùs deliramentum, asserendam esse ac vindicandam cuilibet libertatem conscientiæ. Cui quidem pestilentissimo errori viam aperit plena illa, atque immoderata libertas opinionum, quæ, in sacræ et civilis rei labem, latè grassatur, dictantibus per summam impudentiam nonnullis, aliquid ex eâ commodi in religionem promanare."

And this the Pope promulgates *ex cathedrâ*, as being infallibly decided by his voice, and as being obligatory upon all the children of the Church to receive. But it is manifest that this sentiment is in hopeless contradiction with the principles actually entertained by many of our own Roman Catholic fellow-countrymen—with the incessant protestations that resound at every meeting of the members of their communion in Ireland.

47. It may however be said, allow something for the irritation which is created by the constant spectacle of a Church endowed exclusively by the law, while it makes actual provision for the spiritual wants only of a small fraction of the people. It would be quite allowable to demur to such an answer: for if circumstances may apologise for the alteration of principles, thus important and thus highly sanctioned, change-

* Republished in London, 1833.

lessness, the magic spell of Romanism, is resolved into a shadow. But let that pass. The British colonies would afford me an ample supply of declarations, that the Roman Catholic Faith is absolutely inconsistent with legal intolerance; nay, even with abundant denunciations of the whole position that government ought, in any manner, to restrict its pecuniary aid to any one religious communion. And it is still more remarkable, as an example of bias, that the very different doctrine that the state ought not to afford any countenance or pecuniary aid to religion under any of its forms, is apparently confined, so far as the adherents of the Church of Rome within the British empire is concerned, to Ireland, where that aid is indeed given, but given to the Church which is regarded as a rival. But while the Pope declares the duty of recognising and supporting the Church to be incumbent on states, his bishops are elsewhere allowed boldly to repudiate the doctrine, and to assign a divine origin to the system of "religious equality." I will select, in attestation of my statement, the same account to which reference has already been made, of the Australian meeting.* Dr. Polding, "by the grace of God, and by the appointment of the Holy See, bishop, vicar apostolic of New Holland and Van Dieman's Land," thus broadly teaches, in the very teeth of the bishop of bishops, respecting toleration and liberty of conscience or opinion:—

* See the Australian Chronicle, No. 1. Aug, 2, 1839. Dr. Polding's Pastoral Address, delivered at the meeting.

"With worldly ascendancy and worldly superiority, we have no wish to be connected. How can we, in a country where happily for us and our posterity, the principle of religious equality, a principle not invented by man, which, whilst the social relations remain intact, man cannot infringe by penal enactments and be just, that principle of religious equality has been acknowledged to exist, has been adopted as the basis of legislative arrangements."

The passage alludes to the Church Act of New South Wales, passed in 1836, which allots pecuniary aid to Christians of different denominations, according to a scale of corresponding local contributions.

Then a resolution is moved, and carried unanimously, characterised as "an axiom," and couched in these terms:—

Resolved, 1stly—"That the object of government being the outward well-being of society, and not the inward conscience, we hold that no temporal authority has a right legislatively to interfere in these relations which are purely between man and his Creator; hence, whilst with gratitude we acknowledge the good feeling which has authoritatively declared the existence of perfect equality amongst all denominations of Christian belief in the social relations of the colony, we, at the same time, avow our conviction that this exists not solely by reason of legislative enactment, but in virtue of man's own right."

48. Now I would submit, that there is something to excite the suspicions of the religious inquirer in

these phenomena of a system, where we find such unavowed and unbounded flexibility in matters of the highest moral interest, combined with the constant profession of changelessness; this large adaptation of principles which claim to be immutable, to worldly devices and to temporary attractions. Such a policy presents qualities formidable indeed to an antagonist in the immediate emergencies of the conflicts of the day, but it is quite wanting in that singlemindedness, which is the capital secret of the strength of Truth, and the guarantee of her final victory; and the very weapons of its warfare are therefore at once a cause and a proof of the moral weakness of the system which employs them. Let me not, however, be supposed to imply that these illustrations pretend to afford an adequate idea of the variations of the Roman Church. There is hardly any variation which her controversialists have ever charged upon their opponents, so great as her variation of the Nicene Creed, by appending to it the general pledge to believe all things that she might teach.*

* With respect to the unity which is supposed to characterise the Roman communion, I will quote the following extract from a letter of Louis XIV. to Barillon, in 1685:—"Il y a bien de l'apparence que le roi d'Angleterre faisant à present une profession si publique de la religion Catholique demandera bientôt au Pape des Evêques de sa communion; et comme il ne faut pas douter que sa sainteté ne les choisisse du clergé d'Angleterre, parmi lesquels je suis averti qu'il y a bien des gens qui sont imbus de la doctrine de Jansenisme, je serai aise que vous fassiez connôitre adroitement au roi l'interêt qu'il a de les bien discerner, en sorte que si le bon exemple, qu'il donne à tous ses sujets, est aussi suivi qu'il est à desirer, *ce royaume, sortant d'une hérésie, ne tombe pas dans une autre qui ne seroit guères moins dangereuse.*"—Fox's James II. Appendix, p. liii.

49. I am far, indeed, from supposing that the history of Protestantism, even in the Church of England, presents no causes for regret; that in flying from the greater evils we have not been obliged to incur the lesser. I do not look back either upon the tendency to persecution, which, arising partly from the intimate relations of the Church as reformed with the temporal power, disfigured the annals of the sixteenth and of the seventeenth centuries, without pain; nor can I reflect, but with the strongest sensations of shame and humiliation, upon the great decline in doctrine and discipline, in the spirit and practice of religion, which amidst the apparent peace of the eighteenth, had crept into almost every portion of her body; and which prepared for this generation its masses of dissent and of religious ignorance, and in consequence the fearful conflicts to which it appears to be destined. We are reproached from the side of Romanism with the secularity which has sometimes appeared to sit enthroned in our ecclesiastical administration, and which the visible ornaments of our grandest * churches too convincingly attest; with the differences and fluctuations of opinion; with the light and, sometimes, scornful estimate formed of all severely spiritual discipline; with the abundance of schism and separation; with the

* See Dr. Wiseman's Letter to Mr. Poynder on his publication entitled "Paganism and Popery considered." It would be easy, were it of any advantage, to recriminate by showing the uses to which in unreformed times the Cathedral of Saint Paul's was applied. See Blunt's History of the Reformation, ch. vi. Second Part of Henry IV. act i. scene 2. Davies's Critical Observations on Shakespeare, Vol. i. p. 283.

ostensible organisation and permanence of the forms which, as if in mockery, it has assumed; with the teeming masses of population which, alas, unheeded by her shepherds and by her members in the day when the evil was not beyond redress, have now passed beyond the present reach of the Church into ignorance and sensualism, and into unbelief and disaffection, their sure concomitants. Again, beyond our own borders, we are taunted by adversaries with the unreclaimed masses of Ireland, whose fidelity is still, to our shame, the favourite boast of Rome; and, lastly, with that countless family of colonies which have owed to us their origin, and for whose religious characters and prospects we are mainly to render account. And all these evils are alleged to be the consequence of that reformation which the English Church accepted for itself, and countenanced and supported elsewhere. I am far from admitting, but yet I cannot wholly repel the charge, nor refuse to perceive how much we have to admit, to deplore, and to redress.

50. With a view of determining how far these accusations are coloured with justice, let me say, first, that I will admit, without scruple, the following principle: that a national Church is the centre of the national life of a country; and that having had the general concurrence of the temporal power, without which it could not be termed national, it is responsible (first in its ministers, then also in its members), responsible as an institution, before the bar of impartial judgment, for the social condition at large, as being

the first and paramount cause which determines it effectually towards well-being, or towards the reverse.

51. But when it is proposed to me, as an inference from the failure of the Anglican Church in the full discharge of her work, to admit that she would have done better in the sixteenth century to have borne her actual evils, rather than fly to others that she knew not of: then in equity I must apply to other countries the searching test to which our own has been unshrinkingly submitted, and must ask, whether Romanism has, in the phrase of Mr. Canning, worked (relatively) well; has had greater success in giving permanency and power to institutions, health and vigour to the national life, in cases where, with at least equal advantages and aids, it has been in the enjoyment of ascendancy.

52. And for this end the eye must be directed not to countries which, like Austria and Spain, have for centuries prolonged, from generation to generation, an existence of comparative tranquillity in mental respects, and also of comparative slumber; whose energies have been little developed or tried, except under material forms. But as in England the example has been chosen in which, of all Protestant countries, the practical life of man has been most energetic, in which the greatest amount of influence determining and guiding the world are to be found, and from whence the extrinsic effects upon civilisation in its largest circles have been most powerful; so, in order to test the social results of Romanism, we

must look to the corresponding Roman Catholic country, which has enjoyed the first place in territorial greatness, in martial achievement, in active talent, in general influence : namely, to France.

53. Not boastfully, for God knows that on neither side is there any real scope for boasting, but yet in earnest vindication of those who have been in my belief England's greatest benefactors, I ask is the social condition of England more faulty or more hopeless than that of France? Although legal aid was not scantily applied on this side the Channel, yet no revocation of an Edict of Nantes gave to the English Church an uncontrolled dominion over the religion of the country; but beset on the right hand and on the left, alike by the opponents and by the exaggerators of the Reformation, she maintained like Sicinius the many-handed fight, for she rested like him upon a rock. The interests of religion were the determining principle with both parties in the Great Rebellion under Charles the First;* the security of the Church was the primary object of the Revolution of 1688, and apprehension on her account was that which bound together, as one man, the hearts of the people. And to this day is it not a truth notorious to the experience of every man who pays regard to public affairs, that religion, whether on one side or on the other, whether rightly or wrongly understood, is yet the one theme which most deeply pierces and most thoroughly

* This even the Satirist of the period illustrates historically. Hudibras, Part I. Canto i. v. 6.

arouses the national heart, is the one cardinal consideration upon which hinges the ascendancy or the downfal of political parties, which recently has twice, within the short space of five years,* paralysed a ruling creed, and broken and disorganised its adherents? What inference are we to draw? That religion in some form has reached the very core of the nation's heart, and abides there, whether worse or better understood, with power and a deep practical energy.

54. Consider the long continued prevalence and prosperity of dissent in this country; calculate its food in the secularity and the gross abuses of the administration of Church patronage; reflect on the advantages it has derived from the zeal by which it has been frequently characterised, from its range in a field too often unoccupied by the commissioned ministers of the Gospel, from the progress of popular rights, and the concussion through great changes, at home and abroad, of all established institutions; and then there will be some competency to estimate what must be the vital incorporation of the English Church with the deep though often suppressed affections of the people; and what inferences we ought to draw when we learn from statistical and authentic evidence,† how great a proportion of the entire people still receive the sacred rite of marriage at the hands of her ministers. The returns made under Lord John

* 1829—1834.

† 'First Report of the Registrar General of Births, Deaths, and Marriages.' Presented to Parliament in 1839.

Russell's Act of 1836 arrange in one column the marriages solemnised according to the ritual of the Church; in another they combine together those of Roman Catholics, of Scottish Presbyterians, of English Dissenters, and of persons either professing no religion, or at least deeming it proper to emancipate the rite of marriage from its bonds. The result is that of 111,000 marriages celebrated in England during the year 1838, the aggregate of all the latter classes amounts to between 4000 and 5000, while 107,000 has been the share of the Church. Nor is there any reason to expect any very great change in the proportions, any I mean which will raise the former class out of a comparative numerical insignificance.

55. Now what does this most important result really teach? Evidently no couples formed of persons who are dissenters from conscience could repair to the altars of the Church. Not indeed that the same overwhelming proportion of the people, which is represented by these authentic figures, are deliberate, systematic, and consistent adherents of the Church: but that their affections in this or some not very different proportion are not yet fundamentally estranged, that they still regard her as their spiritual mother, even while, under the influence of lax conceptions concerning the nature and title of an apostolical ministry, they see no religious inconsistency in attending upon chapels, and in becoming members of societies, which as such are not within the pale of her communion. It shows, therefore, that the religion which has so

deeply impregnated the hearts of the people is still, in an immense proportion, essentially the religion of the Church.

56. Consider again, the extreme jealousy of all taxation, but especially of direct taxation, in this country, and remember the heavy burdens which fall on the occupiers of land; further take into view that when in the year 1836 a plan was proposed by the administration for the entire abolition of church-rates, it was propounded with a declaration of friendliness to the Church, and purported to relieve her from embarrassment: it did not involve in any palpable or popular shape a diversion of Church property from ecclesiastical uses; and yet under the impression that it was a project practically injurious to the Church, notwithstanding so many pretexts under which a weak or a hostile mind might have sought and found shelter, more than 130,000 persons absolutely petitioned Parliament against the abolition of the rate, being for much the greater part owners and occupiers of land, on whom the burden directly or substantially fell. A much smaller number of the same classes petitioned for its removal.

57. Again; we find in some Roman Catholic countries, as in France particularly, that the Church has failed to retain her hold on the wealthier classes, on the greater portion of the men of refinement, of taste, of education, and of literature: that the learned professions are made up in great measure of persons indifferent or more often positively hostile to her inter-

ests ; that the universities are regarded by her with jealous apprehension, and that the spirit of their youth is unfriendly to her influence. Now it is most worthy of note, that the very reverse of every one of these propositions is true, and notoriously true, in England. That not only the noble and the wealthy, but the almost unbroken bulk of the well-educated classes are in the communion of the Church ; that her pale comprehends the great majority of the learned lay professions ; that the literature of the country is generally in the hands of her members ; that the warm young blood of the nation, at the universities and great schools, which from day to day recruits its life, is enthusiastic in her behalf. Once the noble and ancient families of England could only spare for the sacred ministry such of their children as in no other profession could obtain support ; but now they have supplied her with many of the best and ablest of the rising generation of her clergy.

58. Chateaubriand, I think, asks scornfully of Protestantism—*Qu' est-ce qu'il a fait de beau?* We must not indeed compare the material works of beauty produced in this country since the Reformation, with those which are the boast of earlier centuries : but have not Roman Catholic countries too themselves lost much of that genuine productiveness in art which appears to belong mainly to the youth of civilisation ? I confess, indeed, the decadence, nay, for I do not love to stint admissions, the grossness of our architecture ; and yet, has it done more in France, during

the last two centuries, for the Church, than it has done in England? Not altogether the prevalence of a niggardly spirit, but much more the depreciation of taste from the extensive prevalence of commercial pursuits, has caused, in many cases, the meanness of our performances, which have sometimes been as costly as they are unsightly.* If in painting we stand lower (which may be questionable) than the school of France, it is, I think, mainly ascribable to the same cause; Italy itself has been rapidly declining in this the loveliest of her embellishments, ever since the period of the Reformation, and is now probably more depressed than either. It is much to be questioned whether if the changes in religion had never taken place, we should, other circumstances remaining the same, have advanced much beyond the point where we now stand.

59. But in the yet higher department of beauty, that of the pure immaterial productions of the mind, I think it will hardly be denied that England may with unblushing front meet both the question and the querist. How wonderful a manifestation is presented by the reign of Elizabeth, of the highest range of poetic genius in its later years, as well of a wealth never excelled in the manly energies of practical talent and sagacity. Granted, that the tone was not equally sustained: but yet, if we take the last three hundred

* For example, the church of St. Marylebone is said to have cost 70,000*l.*; that of St. Pancras 80,000*l.*, and that of St. Luke in Liverpool (which is however a beautiful structure, though scarcely proportioned to the expenses of building it), 50,000*l.*

years, the achievements of England in poetry and the higher walks of literature will surely bear comparison with those of any other nation during the same period, except perhaps the Germans, whose distinguished proficiency will certainly not be claimed as an evidence in favour of the intellectual and imaginative superiority of countries attached to Romanism.*

60. Again, we hear much of the decay of Christian liberality since the period of the Reformation, and in our own land it has been grievous. It has been stated in Parliament,† though I have not been able to learn on what authority, that there were in England, three hundred years ago, between parish churches and minor edifices, not less than 97,000 places of worship. At least we know that there were churches enough, and more than barely enough, for the Christian flocks, while hundreds of thousands now are as sheep wandering on the hills, and without a shepherd. But let us inquire whether there has not been an at least

* The late Mr. Cobbett, in his History of the Reformation (vol. i. p. 34), has a peculiar method of demonstrating that the Reformation blighted English literature. He compares our nation with France in respect of the number of poets, philosophers, mathematicians, and so forth, whom each has respectively produced: and he exhibits us in a woful minority of 132 to 676; but he selects the names from a biographical dictionary, of which the basis I believe is French; the consequence is, that Italy, which has been enormously prolific in literary men, has but few more names than England, and only one quarter of the number of France.

† "It was known that before the Reformation there were in this country about 97,000 places of worship for one-third of the present population."—Speech of Mr. O'Connell on Education, June 20, 1839; Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, xlviii. p. 617. Mr. Blunt (Hist. Ref. ch. 2) quotes the number at 52,000 from "The Supplication of Beggars."

corresponding decay of pious munificence in Roman Catholic countries. The stream of religious endowment has not lately flowed, I apprehend, in France or Italy, in Austria or the Peninsula, as it did during the middle ages. On the contrary, we may look long and almost in vain for the benefactions of the last three hundred years. The unfinished churches of Italy in particular seem to show almost throughout that peninsula that the spirit of munificence and faith in which many great works were begun, decayed so rapidly as to prevent their completion. At least it is very safe to challenge a comparison between England and any of the continental countries on this score.

61. The Reformation did not in this country freeze or check the generosity of the children of the Church,* whatever scope it gave to the rapacious avarice of the great. Nearly the whole of the professorships in the Universities both of Oxford and Cambridge have been founded since the Reformation; and in Cambridge it appears that not one-fourth of the entire endowments are held in right of any Roman Catholic benefaction: nor is there any reason to suppose that the proportion is materially different at Oxford; while Dublin derives its entire possessions from the same period. It is true indeed that the channel of pious and thankful bounty was altered, and with a sufficient reason. The provision for public worship and the maintenance of

* Speech of Sir R. H. Inglis, Bart., M.P., on the Bill for the admission of Dissenters to the Universities in 1834. Corrected report, pp. 12—15.

a clergy was already redundant; while that for the education of the young in such a knowledge of Christianity as befitted their rational faculties, was extremely in arrear. Accordingly that which had been nobly done by William of Wykham, by Henry the Sixth, by Dean Colet, was imitated, not only by Edward the Sixth and by Elisabeth, but by their subjects in immense numbers; and the splendid endowments of the grammar-schools of this country, whose pecuniary means will one day* we must hope be made more generally productive of adequate results, attest the liberality of the children of the Church† during the latter part of the sixteenth and the whole of the seventeenth century. Besides these, there were immense endowments for the relief of the poor, by foundations of hospitals and almshouses, which may also be employed in illustration of this argument. Of the present there is indeed little to be said, except that it has afforded some brilliant examples,‡ and gives hope

* During the present Session (1840) a Bill has been introduced for increasing the utility of these schools, and passed into a law.

† The Clerical Almanack gives a list of them, with the dates of the foundations in 297 cases. Of these, 37 were before 1534; 27 since 1700; and 233 in the intermediate period of 166 years. I am unable to state accurately the dates of other charitable foundations. The Quarterly Statistical Journal for July 1839 gives (p. 240) a table of the almshouses or hospitals for Herefordshire only. Out of 24 foundations whose dates are specified, 16 are in the seventeenth, and only 4 in the eighteenth century.

‡ The Bishop of Calcutta proposes, in a letter to the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (1839), to raise a cathedral in Calcutta; the cost will be 40,000*l.*, and of this he intends to furnish 20,000*l.* Those who know the difference between the resources of bishops now and in the middle ages will perceive that such munificence as this is worthy of any period of the Christian Church. The excel-

for the future. Has Christian charity, however, been more lively, upon the whole, during this period, among our continental neighbours? *

62. But after all, the question of moral results must be determined not only by an enumeration of these details, but by an attempt to fix with larger grasp the degree in which each of the religious systems has influenced and penetrated the national life in general. Now the comparison between England and France is, as I think, at the very least, equitable; not only because they are the leading nations on either hand, but in other points. If England has had the advantage of a temperate form of Protestantism, France was as

lent prelate will not be without imitators. A valuable pamphlet by the Bishop of Chester shows that in his diocese fifteen churches have been consecrated within the year 1839, at a cost for building and endowment of 64,800*l.*; "all, with the exception of 2700*l.*, originating in private benevolence" (Churches consecrated in the year 1839, p. 25). I indulge myself by quoting from the same source two instances of the most hopeful aspect. In the year 1837 the inhabitants of Bolton were desirous to present to their vicar, Mr. Slade, a service of plate in testimony of their regard after he had laboured among them for more than twenty years. But upon learning their intention he begged that the fund might be employed in building a church; which was accordingly raised, and it was consecrated during the same year (ibid. p. 7). A lady of the name of Hyndman recently "left her fortune, more than 60,000*l.*, for the purpose of building churches. Owing to some informality in the will, it might have been set aside. But her brother, on whom the fortune would have devolved, refused to take the advantage which the law gave him, and carried his sister's design into full effect." (p. 9.) About as many churches will, I believe, be consecrated in the same diocese during the present year (1840).

I could name instances of lay impropriators who are at this time actually restoring their tithes to the Church; after the example of the period immediately succeeding the Restoration. Blunt's Hist. Ref. ch. viii.

* Fra Paolo, in the Introduction to his History of Ecclesiastical Revenues.

much distinguished by that nationality of religion which, under the name of Gallicanism, contributed in so great a degree to qualify its adherence to the Pope. If France was a country of very old institutions, which might have passed through infancy and maturity into natural decrepitude, such also, and in no less a degree, was England. If again we regard the important consideration of political rights, we find that the greater development of popular privilege in England has generated a spirit of inquiry and of self-dependence, which would always expose the claims of the Church to a severe ordeal, and give additional value to the homage she might actually receive, as being both voluntary and reflective.

63. But above all, in one grand distinctive feature, the English Church has been subjected to a much sharper and sorer test, than that of France was called to endure. The rapid extension of commerce and manufacture, the accumulation of capital, the unprecedented progression of national wealth, these have indeed been the fiery trial of the English Church and nation. Under such circumstances, not only is taste depressed, and knowledge in its higher ranges discouraged, but a hardened utilitarianism gradually overspreads the public mind and determines its habits, feeding upon the seen and depreciating the unseen, always craving for palpable and immediate results, and wide as the poles apart from that spirit of faith which plants and waters, and then waits without wearying for God to give the increase. These are to the nation

as to the individual, the thorns which beset and choke the Word even when it is on the point of bearing fruit, and after it has braved and survived the storms of persecution: those thorns which the Saviour, who well "knew what was in man,"* has represented, in the parable of the sower, as the most difficult and perilous of all the forms of temptation.

64. Yet, under all these circumstances of accumulated hazard, and while scarcely yet recovering from the languor consequent upon inveterate and most extensive abuses in the administration of her patronage, the Church of England abides in the heart of the nation at large; is found in political warfare to constitute the strength of those who in the nation's eye stand as her defenders; and internally rises from day to day into greater unity of sentiment, and more effective and sustained energy of action.

65. In France, on the other hand, under the operation of her unreformed system of religion, the spiritual, the moral, and the social life sank by degrees to so low an ebb that nothing at the last remained to bind man to God, or man to man; and to spirits regardless of heaven and earth the chasm and the flames of hell were made manifest (to adopt the powerful thought of the greatest historian of that crisis, Mr. Carlyle†) in the appalling scenes of the French Revolution, as if in order, by this last resort, to convince them that the universe had yet some realities.

* Matt. xiii. 22.

† The French Revolution; a History. By Thomas Carlyle. 3 vols. 2d Edition, London, 1839.

France has been shattered in the moral shock of that revolution; government after government has been placed over the people, but, though the nation be weary of its excesses, it does not recover the tone of health and nature; though the hurricane has passed over it, and is at rest, the moral aspect of society at large continues desolate and lifeless. There is no pervading reviviscence; there is, except indeed in those parts of the country (and they are few) which have rejected the new ideas, no cherishing of the ancient and hereditary life of the nation, no attachment to its rulers, no glorying in institutions mechanically constructed and without root in the general heart, no pervading influence of religion; but a great machine of government and a powerful army stand in the place of all that for the sake of which a man cherishes in his inmost soul the name and memory of his country. It is not so much that the people are oppressed by heavy grievances, as that remedies bring no contentment; the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint: and no man can tell, no man dare conjecture what long fruitless years of moral apathy, or what yet more fearful crisis of agonising torture, or what other and even stranger lot lies reserved for that great country in the bosom of the future.

I do not indeed think lightly of those elements of social peril and convulsion which England carries in her bosom; elements so formidable, that as M. de Tocqueville has said, her dangers and distresses do all but equal her opulence and glory: but here, there is a

very powerful opposing sentiment of loyalty, of hereditary patriotism, of deep and intelligent attachment to the Church and to the institutions of the country, and a heart prepared to make sacrifices for their sake.

66. Thus it seems to be the tendency of the Roman system where it has unchecked dominion, to exclude and suppress reformation, until neither the evils nor their remedies can be endured; until minds grow secretly, and by a long course of years, into hopeless estrangement, and the moral tone, the desire for social and for spiritual health, which are the only conditions that render real reformation possible, have utterly passed away. So then the disease, and the sense of its presence, seem to exist in an inverse ratio; and by the time that the former has reached its climax, there remains neither inclination to suggest a cure, nor constitutional energy to bear the necessary treatment.

Although in France the extension of political privilege has only reached to a number of persons five or six times less, than in this country, from a smaller population, are entitled to its exercise, yet the fabric of the constitution is perhaps in the same proportion more insecure; and appears to depend for its existence on the prolongation from day to day of the menaced life of one man endowed with great and most peculiar abilities. Although the avowed dissidents from the Church are known scarcely to form a twentieth part of the entire population, the principle of a national religion is utterly abandoned; Jew and Christian, the

ambassadors and the blasphemers of the Messiah, in the eye of the legislature, are regarded equally and only as stipendiaries of the national treasury. No religious aim or interest appears to ennoble the ceaseless conflicts which disturb without animating the state. The Church has indeed revived, but it exists as an isolated body in the midst of a population, into the elements of whose general life it seems to find no entrance. Listen finally, that we may then at length avert our eyes from the sad picture, to the complaint of one of the most eloquent and devoted of her sons:* "Yes, the nations of Christendom have suffered their true mother, the Catholic Church, to be dethroned: those tender and powerful hands which heretofore wielded a sword to avenge all their injuries, as they held a balsam to heal every wound, those hands have been seen laden with chains; her crown of fair flowers hath been torn from her brow, and each leaf hath fallen, fading and perishing, before the malignant breath of presumptuous reasoning. False philosophy, despotism, and anarchy have led her captive before the eyes of men, overwhelming her with insult and ignominy; yet, unsated with her sufferings, have they buried her in a dungeon, which they would fain designate her tomb, at the gate of which all three keep watchful guard."

67. And now a few words, after having concluded this review, upon that imputation of a tendency to Romanism which is sometimes cast upon the purely

* Introduction to the Life of St. Elizabeth of Hungary, by the Count de Montalembert, p. 68.

Catholic, or, as they are among us more familiarly denominated, Church principles. That the holders of Church principles may, from possessing a practical acquaintance with our own religious maladies, while they behold the Papal system only as it is gilded and mellowed in the distance, be inclined to judge too harshly of mere Protestantism, and thus negatively favour its opposite; or that resistance and obloquy at home may produce some degree of this tendency; or, that their partial praise of this or that portion of Roman Catholic institutions may, by the force of the law of association, either be mistaken for or even in itself actually become a sympathy not sufficiently guarded and discriminating: all this, and even more than this, may be true. And yet I, at least, utter it as my own firm, deliberate, and governing persuasion, little as it can be worth to any one, that those Catholic or primitive principles not only do not naturally lead into Romanism, but are the one barrier which effectually closes the way thither to persons of an ardent and at the same time a confiding spirit: that, as they have in each successive age done their peculiar work, as heretofore for many generations they have counteracted the false opinions that lead to religious division, so now they are the specific remedy providentially ordained and adapted to meet a danger to which unqualified Protestantism must ever be open in periods of great religious excitement.

68. But surely the last three hundred years, during very nearly the whole of which period this accusation has been advanced without ceasing, ought to afford us

the means of testing it by experience. Now let us ask those who advance it for the list of converts, from the principles here ascribed to the English Church, to Romanism. Of all the learned and all the pious men in England who have strongly developed their views of those principles, if no greater a proportion have become adherents of the Papal system than, in proportion to their numbers, other classes of Protestants have supplied, it is clear that the charge must fall to the ground. But how will it astonish the credulous and uninformed to be told that the return is not one! Has it been so with other modes of opinion in the body of the Reformed? On the contrary, Mr. Hallam * informs us that, in the beginning of the seventeenth century, a very large number, perhaps not less than a moiety, of the learned Protestants, became proselytes. That was the very time when, as we are told, Archbishop Laud was studying to reduce England under the Papal jurisdiction. But upon his trial, in the year 1645, the aged primate uttered the memorable challenge, in which he defied his accusers to name the man, formed in the principles of the English Church, who had abandoned his profession. Or was this because temporal inducements preserved them in a nominal conformity to the Anglican ritual and communion? On the contrary; the vast majority of the body of our clergy were driven, under the usurpation, from house and home, their persons subjected in many instances to severe suffering, their function, their faith proscribed,

and still, and still—not a single deserter to Romanism from among so many against whom the charge has lain? *

69. And down to the present day the case remains unaltered. The memory of not many years past could name in this country persons of undoubted piety and zeal, who have left the ministerial office in the Church of England, or the analogous function in the separated bodies, to recommence their career as Romish priests; and the last generation has seen most distinguished and illustrious Germans adopt the very same course. And still the zeal of controversy has not yet discovered one single convert, of whom it could be said that he had ever been really imbued with the knowledge and the love of the specific principles of the Church of England.†

If such evidence of facts cannot avail, what hope

* In a work intitled "The Rights of the Christian Church Asserted," (2nd Edition, London, 1706), I have indeed found it alleged (preface, p. liii.) that Bishop Goodman, Dr. Bailey, Dr. Goff, Dr. Vane, &c., confirmed the suspicions generally entertained of Archbishop Laud and his friends, by becoming Romanists. But what evidence is there that any of these persons were imbued with Church principles? Dr. Goff, or Gough, according to Walker, was the son of a Puritan minister. Bishop Goodman was actually suspended under Archbishop Laud, for not subscribing the canons of 1640, and he was certainly not a Romanist. See Appendix C. But, besides that none of the four are men of any note, the accuser offers no evidence at all tending to connect any of them with the ecclesiastical views and policy of the Primate and the bishops in general. Walker (Attempt, Part ii. p. 33) says that about seven or eight clergy, and as many more scholars from the universities, from among the whole body of those ejected in the great rebellion, apostatised.

† See, upon this subject, Chillingworth's Letter to the Author of Charity Maintained, sec. 20-26, where he very ably defends the Anglican divines of his own day against the charge of Romanising.

can we have of profit from any resort to arguments whose cogency can hardly fail to be inferior? And yet there are arguments applicable to this subject, so distinct, that it would be unjust and unwise altogether to pass them by.

If we refer to history, we do not find that it supplies the members of the Church with grounds for thinking favourably or lightly of the Papal dominion and of its action upon our country. God grant that they may not, through ignoble fear of most unjust reproaches, speak with an ungenerous asperity against their fellow Christians! But indeed we owe to Romanism, but too perceptibly, a long catalogue of mischiefs. The religious evils of the period since 1688 we attribute mainly to an undiscriminating reaction from it: but the reaction was one itself engendered by the machinations of Romanism against the reformed Church, which caused the expulsion of James the Second.

70. The informed churchman has a fixed principle which stands between him and all the claims of Romanism, and which other men do not possess. He cannot accompany those crowds of Protestants who, in our metropolis, on each successive Sunday, are seduced by music from the worship of the Church to rites which to them are infinitely less innocent than to the sincere even if superstitious worshippers whose blindness they contemplate with supercilious pity. He sees with pain that the Roman Catholics of England, considered as a body, however far be the idea from their individual intent, are, over and above the differences on points of

doctrine, as much open to the charge of occupying a schismatical position as any other class of dissenters. In whatever degree Church principles may lead to the inference respecting the one, they must in strictness also establish it as concerning the other. Thus then it appears, that instead of leading him nearer to that communion, they place a new bar between it and our own, a bar quite unknown to those who refuse to recognise the visibility of the Church, and the obligation to remain under her ministry.

71. Further, however, the churchman is on many occasions most painfully reminded that the energies of those of his fellow-countrymen who render their allegiance to Rome, are not always joined with his to aid in preserving those deep fundamental principles of national Christianity and of religious education, and even those decent relics of ancient religious celebrations, which yet remain to us;* but are united too often with the efforts of such men as with much more consistency labour for the entire separation of specific religion, indeed of all religion, from the state and from the national life. That this should be done by

* I must refer in particular to the following Division lists of the House of Commons: Feb. 22, 1839, on a Bill to substitute affirmations for oaths in the case of all persons alleging a conscientious objection to judicial swearing; and Feb. 18 and 28, 1839, on Mr. Duncombe's motion, "That it is the opinion of this House, that during Lent no greater restrictions should be placed upon theatrical entertainments, within the city of Westminster, than are placed upon the like amusements at the same period in every other part of the metropolis." Mr. Howard (Carlisle) voted on both occasions against this motion. I have purposely selected these, because they were not what are termed party questions. On the latter indeed the administration of the day was opposed to the motion as it is given above.

men who join to democratical principles the extreme form of the tenet of private judgment, who regard individual errors as invested with a sacredness which they would be the last to accord to laws and governments when misled, and who hold human choice to be not only a condition but the basis of our religion—this cannot surprise us; but the principles of Romanism condemn every such notion even more vehemently than our own, and one knows not how to explain, in a manner satisfactory both to charity and truth, the course which is pursued with respect to these essential matters by the bulk of its professors moving in public life, however true it be that it is far indeed from being shared by all their influential brethren in the country.

72. There is nothing I apprehend more truly desirable, than that the discussion of the great theological controversy with the Church of Rome should be held carefully apart from the questions which so constantly arise out of the existing relations of the professors of the conflicting creeds; that we should not resort, for the solution of every apparent enigma in conduct, or in order to stigmatise a policy or measure which we hold injurious, to heavy charges founded on hypothetical evidence, and sometimes, I think, not very accurately apportioned among different classes of religionists. But it is manifest, on the other hand, that it becomes extremely difficult either to recommend or even to hold this wiser course, when we find great bodies of our Roman Catholic fellow Christians acting in a spirit radically at variance with the simplest ele-

mentary principles of national religion. A course, which seems no less inconsistent and unaccountable, than if Dissenters should vote for the restoration of papal doctrines and observances in the Church. Be that as it may, the circumstances are such as will both render any real inclination to Romanism less excusable, and as should lead those who deal loosely in such imputations to consider well how far it is probable that they can be founded in truth.

73. Upon the whole, I trust that it will soon be seen that it is time to have done with these vague and general (I do not here speak of specific) charges of tendency to Romanism, which assume the bare fact of a resemblance as a sufficient ground of condemnation; and which are altogether unworthy of men of charity or of sense. Let all cases be judged upon their own merits, and not by what is secondary and accidental in them. If there be in the Roman system a fuller development of some elements of strength than in our own, have we come so near to dotage that we shall deliberately refuse to profit by their experience? If it be thought fit to represent their religion as altogether hostile to our own, yet why should we not learn from adversaries? Had Rome herself in her comparative debility and degeneracy of the sixteenth century been so besotted as to refuse to enlist in her own service tendencies, the course of which was evidently towards Protestantism, opinions essentially sympathetic with those of the Reformers; had she listened, in a word, to the voice of those who occupied in her communion the place filled in ours by those alarmists who detest

her and dread everything held in common with her; short would have been her death struggles, and never would she have maintained that extent of ecclesiastical frontier at which we are still astonished. But amidst the fury of conflict and the cruelties of persecution, she bethought herself of the past, and calculated profoundly for the future. She braced anew her discipline, she restored active and efficient preaching, she returned to the cultivation of learning, she provided scope and vent for religious zeal, she recalled within her own body the memory and the tokens of the spiritual principle in man, and of that unseen world in which even now he lives. She succeeded in giving a religious character to her warfare, and she gained this immense advantage mainly by measures which doubtless the more contracted minds among her children must have deemed highly dangerous from their tendency to Protestantism. We accuse her of blindness: we lament that she should have so dealt with religious dogma as to prevent effectual reformation, and, humanly speaking, to perpetuate division in the Church; but candour compels us to admit, that she applied herself with wonderful sagacity to the use of instruments for the support and propagation of the creed thus embarrassed. Ours, as we believe, is free from impurities and incumbrances with which hers is still beset; but why should not the sounder scheme have the advantage of that organisation, through which the more erroneous one has recovered from a state of extreme and nearly desperate exhaustion, and still main-

tains the fight against a portion at least of her adversaries on something like equal terms?

74. But it may be said there is a violent and inexplicable contrariety in the application of phrases of such different import to the Church of Rome, as have been employed respecting her in the several parts of this discussion. We have found in her the undoubted existence of eminent sanctity; a watchful care for the maintenance of the Catholic creeds, and the most conspicuous assertion of their immutability; and finally, a more comprehensive view of the destination of the whole human nature to be renewed and glorified in the Redeemer, than is sometimes exhibited by the professors of a faith less incumbered by positive untruth. And with all this, error in the subtlest intermixture creeping along every vein and every artery of her system, indistinguishably, at least inexplicably, blended with the vital current, and exhibiting itself by the most unequivocal and malignant symptoms. Sober-minded persons will be ready to revolt from so strange a paradox as is presented by this mysterious combination of elements necessarily and always in irreconcileable conflict; elements, of which one should think that the one or the other class must long ago have expelled its rival. But in truth no man can faithfully describe the Church of Rome without dealing in such paradox as this; nor indeed any other Church which is yet militant; nor so much as the life of the individual Christian.

75. And that coindwelling of good and evil which

passes our understanding in each of these cases, is most of all profound and awe-striking in the picture of the Church of Rome; not because the seeds of the most pestilential evil may not be found elsewhere, but because elsewhere their apparent contiguity to what is good is not so close, nor their simulation of truth such a masterpiece of art. It is this intermixture of evil with good in all the subjective forms of religion which gives a dangerous and fearful scope to uncharitableness in theological controversy; and it is the presence of good amidst the evil which may indeed open in an opposite direction the danger of confounding true and false by equating them all, but which if that peril be escaped, presents in the task of their careful discrimination at once an exercise of faith and a labour of love. I well know it might be possible by partial extracts from these pages to fix upon them the charge of leaning either to Romanism, or to a bigoted hatred of Romanism, or perhaps to infidelity; yet I do not fear any serious misrepresentation of their general effect. I know so much of their correspondence with the inward and real convictions of my mind, that I am sure if there be in it a spirit of candour, it will be represented and made manifest in them, and owned by those who may peruse them: while if there be not, no verbal professions could adequately cover the dark and hollow void, and the severest censure would be not more certain than deserved.

SECTION III.—SECOND OBJECTION.

76. Second Objection stated, and Counter-propositions. 77—80. Counter-propositions I. II. 81—3. Counter-proposition III. 84—106. Counter-proposition IV. 107—10. Unconscious admissions from the opponents.

76. The second head of charge against Church principles is, that they place the Church of England in a false and uncharitable relation with other Protestants not possessing Episcopal succession; as denying their orders and sacraments, and consequently the claim of the bodies to which they belong to be considered as true Christian Churches. The objectors who draw this inference from the doctrines then proceed to complain that they are arrogant, and denominate the assertion of them a provocation to themselves; and contend that to "unchurch" so many Christian communities is contrary to charity. To which it may be easily replied (1), that the matter of the doctrines cannot possibly be arrogant if they be true: (2), that the manner of their assertion, if it be arrogant, is in eminent and peculiar contradiction to the consequences which the doctrines themselves ought to produce; in other words, that their proper tendency is to produce not arrogance but humility; (3), that at least they purport to invest with Church privileges six for one whom they are untruly alleged to "unchurch:" (4), that they "unchurch" (if this uncouth term may be employed in order to avoid a periphrasis) no human being.

77. The first proposition may be dismissed as self-evident: let us proceed, then, to consider of the second. There is something that indicates a feeble tone of mind, a dependence on secondary circumstances, and a want of genuine and ardent thirst in the soul for truth, wherever in momentous controversies men leave the great issue of true or false unexamined, and prematurely grasp at some consequence, which, following according to their judgment from the establishment of the contested proposition, is also as they think likely to raise a prejudice against it. Or when, instead of inquiring into that main issue, they inquire into the manner in which it may affect themselves, and the uncomfortable sentiments which it has aroused and may arouse in them: as if their own feelings were to govern and determine the essence of Divine Truth, instead of being submitted to and determined by it. All persons zealous for the peculiar doctrines of Christianity must at once see of how fatal effect will be any countenance given by them to such a method of procedure. Its scope is very wide. It coincides with that kind of argument which is employed by men hostile to the whole Christian scheme, in order to excite our lower nature against it. They represent, that the doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation are transcendental and mysterious, and that it is an insult to rational beings to require of them, as essential to salvation, the belief of tenets which are allowed by their advocates to be beyond our comprehension; and that the doctrine of the general corruption of mankind is

degrading to mankind, and tends to lower their self-respect and blunt the moral sense. For so arguing they are rebuked by all persons of serious minds; and it may well be urged and hoped that such persons should not employ, against other tenets, modes of controversy which they themselves know to be so dangerous and illegitimate.

78. The Roman Catholic Church teaches to this day, that communion with the See of St. Peter is an essential condition of the being of a Church; thus excluding the entire Russian and Greek Church, the great body of Eastern Christians,* and of course the whole of those who in any form have adhered to the Reformation. Now it is much more sensible to set about showing that this claim has no sufficient foundation, than to denounce it as arrogant. For if it be false, we shall thus relieve our consciences from its pressure; and on the other hand, if it be true, we are infinitely indebted to those who perseveringly urge it upon our attention; and we are miserably unwise if we deter the assertors from a labour intended and calculated for our good, by heaping upon them the charge of an offensive assumption. I have often heard the argument stated by Roman Catholics, never once with arrogance, but commonly with earnestness and affection, and with a sense (as it were) of individual depression under its weight and solemnity. But again: was not this claim the identical one, under which the genuine Puritans, and the whole Presby-

* These are said to a mount together to not less than 100,000,000 souls.

terian body, from Cartwright downwards, contended against the Prelatical Constitution of the Church of England, and against her rites and ceremonies? namely, that the entire constitution of the Church was defined in the Word of God, and that that constitution was exclusively Presbyterian: which claim was met, not by complaints of its "unchurching" the Church of England, but by an examination of its matter and foundation. And sure I am, that the manly tone of mind and thought which, whatever their faults may have been, distinguished its assertors, would have effectually prevented them, if such a pretension had been as rigorously employed against them, as it was by them, from falling into the feeble-minded and effeminate practice of looking not at its merits, but at the apparent inconvenience of its results.

79. If, indeed, there is arrogance in the manner in which either here or elsewhere it has been contended that the Church of the Scriptures is a visible and authoritative body, perpetuated through the medium of sacraments and a commissioned ministry, that offensive quality is not to be shielded from reprobation, even if it be found associated with the assertion of the truth. But the specific effect of that truth upon the mind of the assertor ought to be precisely in the opposite direction; for that very same light which shows him that the amount of his privileges is greater than others may suppose, shows him at the same time the commensurate excess of his responsibilities, and therefore of his short comings. The Churchman, who does

not clearly believe in the spiritual powers and privileges of the Church, need have no very sharp compunctions if he find that his own doings and those of his brethren in the cause of God are equalled by the labours of men in other communions, whose spiritual privileges are essentially the same; and therefore he will have no special reason for humbling himself in his intercourse with the members of those communions, or before God, on their account. But the churchman who does with clear consciousness perceive that his standing, in point of means and opportunities of grace, is more favourable than that of his dissenting brethren, cannot, supposing him to reason and feel with any consistency, fail to have sharp compunctions if he discover that he is no more abundant in good works, no more earnest in self-discipline than they; and sharper, and more penetrating with salutary pain, will his emotions be, if he find that he from a richer soil has gathered a more scanty harvest than they have gathered from poorer ground.

80. Every Christian, of whatever distinctive name, in proportion as he is really influenced by the truths of Christianity, will find, when he looks abroad upon the heathen world, no cause of exultation from the comparison between his less favoured brethren and himself; but on the contrary his first and paramount impression will be that of the greater disproportion between means and performances in his case than in theirs—that of his deserving many stripes while they deserve few. The case is exactly analogous with those

who are led to compare a more with a less advantageous form of Christianity itself. And thus the churchman, feeling convinced of Church principles, and of their practical power, is just the man of all others who, when he looks abroad upon the zeal (for example) of Dissenters, is most piercingly admonished to humble himself both in his direct relations with them and before God, on their account: he is the man by whose principles arrogance is most severely condemned, in whom, if it appear, is peculiarly guilty; who, if he doubts of the constitution of some other religious communities, is the more stringently obliged to do justice to the piety of individuals, nay, to esteem them more highly in proportion as he may think the circumstances, under which their actual growth in grace has been attained, to be more disadvantageous.

81. But thirdly: for every one person whom, as it is alleged, the principles in question would deprive of the privileges of membership in the visible Church of Christ, it is at least undeniable that they allow the covenanted possession of those privileges to some five or six, or more, who, according to the opinions inculcated by the professors of simple or extreme Protestantism, are excluded. For it is, I believe, the common opinion in those schools, that although individuals may in the Roman and other churches be saved, yet it must be as individuals merely, under a special process, not, that is to say, as persons incorporated into the body of Christ by virtue of their baptism in those churches; implying, that the societies themselves are not parts of

the Church of Christ. It is therefore quite contrary to consistency, for opponents belonging to this class to make it a matter of charge against Church principles, that they savour of bigotry and intolerance, and that they narrow the ground for the support of national establishments of religion. For how will the bigotry and intolerance which admit six and exclude one stand compared with the charity and liberality which admit the one but exclude the six? Or what means that contraction of basis, which, according to the sense of the accuser himself, comprehends the vast masses of the Greek, the Roman, and the Eastern Churches, even if it were true that it did not include the general body of Protestant believers who form, especially when from fifteen to twenty millions belonging to Reformed Episcopal Churches have been deducted, so small a minority of the Christian world? And here, let it be observed, I am not making any admission, but merely meeting an illegitimate argument on its own ground. If Church principles admitted few and shut the door on many, still we must abide by them if true: if they admit many and shut the door on few; nay, even if, as I believe to be the case, they admit many and shut the door on none, still we must reject them if false. To the issue of truth or falsehood, therefore, let us look, and not to this spurious issue, of what is convenient or what may be inconvenient in argument, as respects the point of popular acceptability. And surely the answer to the charge which I have named, as proceeding from such a quarter, is complete, although, when

they are intrinsically considered, neither the charge nor the answer may be of much value.

82. There is indeed one rejoinder, which is the only one to me conceivable, and which is constantly made; so constantly as, like many of the opinions with which I am now dealing, not to stand in need of specific reference for verification. It is this: that those whom Church principles tend to favour are professors of systems where error preponderates over truth; whereas those whom they seem to represent disadvantageously are the receivers of the pure Gospel. Now this answer recognises and founds itself upon the very principle for which it has here been contended, namely, that the manly, rational, and Christian course of duty is, to put aside collateral considerations, and to regard, as being both first and conclusive, the question of truth or falsehood; for if truth be the title to esteem in a disciple, much more is it in a doctrine. And thus the objection against which I am contending is fully proved, from the mouth of its own proposers, to be illegitimate. And it remains that, in order to have a clear view of the merits, whether of the charge or of the reply to it, we must look to principles deeper than any which they contain in themselves.

83. The chief question, which seminally at least includes the remainder, may be thus stated in two clauses: first, whether the spirit, the historical precedents, and the express teaching of Scripture, require that the ordinary ministry of the Church should be held by personal succession and derivation of powers

from the Apostles; secondly, whether enrolment in that succession is now to be had except from the hands of bishops. But both of these are matters partly of Scriptural exegesis, partly of historical and genealogical inquiry: and in neither sense to be satisfactorily determined by compliments to ourselves, or by reproaches heaped upon our opponents.

84. And now, with respect to our fourth proposition, which regards the charge, that the principles in question represent the great bulk of Protestants as deprived of the privileges of the visible Church; it is fair to admit, in the outset, that the subject-matter of the imputation is very weighty, and deserves to be seriously examined. And the first observation I shall make is this: that it is a charge which applies, and with the same effect, to another class of persons besides those who hold the ancient and Anglican doctrine of succession; namely, to the receivers of an opinion situated between that and the loose popular notions on the subject, an opinion that succession is indeed essential to an ordinary valid ministry; but that it is found mainly, or jointly, or at least sufficiently, in the line of the Presbyterate. Thus it is held by many ministers of the Established Church of Scotland.* On this principle, as I have been informed by intelligent ministers of the Wesleyan body (which, at home and

* See, for example, the Rev. J. Cumming's Apology for the Church of Scotland, p. 20; and Brit. Mag. for Dec. 1839. Rev. Mr Brown, Speech at the Edinburgh Commemoration Meeting of Dec. 20, 1838, Corrected Report, pp. 20-24. Rev. Mr. Cunningham, Letter to the Dean of Faculty, Edinburgh, 1839, p. 17.

abroad, numbers probably not fewer adherents than that last cited), the ministry is held and exercised among them, as far as respects the administration of baptism and the Eucharist. This opinion has also the countenance of some most learned and distinguished Germans, who combine it with the strongest belief of the necessity of Episcopacy to the well-being and full vigour, nay, to the right constitution of a Church; and it is, I apprehend, practically acted on by the non-Episcopal Protestants of the European continent in general. Their case is, indeed, materially distinguished from that of the persons who, in our own country, have voluntarily separated themselves from the Church. Their spiritual government, at least in Germany, appears to have been provisionally accepted, at a time when it was impossible for them to remain with the Episcopal succession, unless they had adopted in full the Romish doctrines. It was adopted in the hope of some accommodation at a future period, which might restore to them a regular system. And although the lapse of years may have weakened in many minds the right sense of the position thus occupied, I do not know that the Protestants of Germany have ever to this day repudiated the Apostolical succession in the Episcopate, while they continue to hold it by an intermediate arrangement in the Presbyterate. But it is clear that those who recognise the succession in any form as essential to a Church, are thereby laid open to precisely the same charge of unchurching others with ourselves; for they "unchurch" the Society of Friends,

the Independents, the Baptists, and the other minor sections of Protestantism, in England and America at least, if not on the Continent; sects professing, for the most part, the very same doctrines as those professed (with certain variations on the more abstract doctrines of Calvinism) by the Lutheran, by the Calvinistic or Reformed, by the Wesleyan, and by the Presbyterian bodies. The fact that they "unchurch" a yet smaller minority of the Christian body than the holders of more primitive and Catholic principles are alleged to do, is quite immaterial according to the sense of disputants, who will not allow it as any excuse for those who hold the Episcopal Succession, that their scheme, when interpreted in the severest mode, admits a number immensely greater than it excludes.

85. One cannot but rejoice to recognise, wherever the great doctrine of succession is firmly held and applied, a bond of ethical and substantial union which implies much, and promises yet more. There is the common acknowledgment of the great principle, that the whole power and efficacy of religion are derived from God, and that, therefore, a valid ministry must have His attestation. After this there only remains to be determined a question of pure fact; namely, whether the sufficiency of Apostolical powers has been historically transmitted in the Presbyterial as well as in the Episcopal line. The spirituality of the ministerial office, and thereby of the whole Christian dispensation is, by all who hold thus, amply admitted.

86. But now, with respect to those who confessedly

have no right Apostolical succession (whether the Episcopal succession only, or the Presbyterial also be entitled to that appellation), I repeat my fourth proposition, namely, that Church principles do not logically deprive them of anything substantial which they themselves claim to possess; that they go to exclude no true lover of Christ from the true Church of Christ; and therefore, *à fortiori*, no such person who, according to the criteria established by his own professed opinions, belongs to it: that they do not represent persons of piety in any communion as debarred from membership in the Church, in any sense in which they themselves lay claim to it. I have varied the verbal forms of the proposition only with a view to explain and to impress the meaning.

87. The question whether the name of "Church" be predicable of this or that religious society or communion, is one whose importance wholly depends upon the answer which is given to a preliminary inquiry; namely, to this, what is signified by the term "Church?" If we reply to that inquiry, the Church is a body visible, permanent, authoritative, bound to unity of faith and of communion, and empowered to administer sacramental ordinances, in which spiritual graces and gifts inhere; the disciple of Protestantism as it is represented in many of our dissenting bodies, will reply: "I know of no such Church: I disclaim the idea, and deny the existence, of any such Church, in which the invisible is tied down to the visible. I believe in an invisible Church, whose mem-

bers on earth have no association of a palpable and external kind, but only that of an unseen bodiless communion of love and charity and Christian graces, held in common, at least, if not positively interchanged. And I believe in many visible churches, making up, if you please to call it so, one visible Church; which are spontaneous associations formed by the will of man, without anything more than God's general command to form them; or any restriction to particular modes; or any corporeal conditions, like succession in the ministry, on which their essence is dependent. They are in their nature external. The ordinances they administer have no grace abiding in them, though they become occasions of grace to those receivers whose minds they stir up to the energetic emotions and acts of faith, love, and prayer. A man may be a true Church member without being in them: a man may be in them, and yet not a member, in any sense, of the spiritual Church. Genuine Church membership is membership in the Church unseen: the connection with the external institution is at best subsidiary, and may be purely nominal. It has in any view no essential and direct relation to connection with the inward association. But, as it is meant to be really and effectively auxiliary to the growth of that true Church membership, which is something intrinsic to the mind of each individual, and something connecting him with an unseen society, so every precaution should be adopted to exclude from it all but the practically holy; who, therefore, in order to admission must show that they are seeking holiness.

This I trust is not an unfair, though of course it can have no pretensions to be an authoritative exposition of the general sentiment of the Protestant schools to which I allude: the more difficult perhaps to embody, because it has scarcely yet been reduced by themselves to a determinate form. *Now it is with this form of opinion that in the following argument I am about to deal. I do not wish to touch the case of the Lutheran and other Churches abroad. The circumstances of necessity under which they have acted, and the intermediate and provisional nature of their arrangements, together with their (I believe) very common recognition of the doctrine of the visibility of the Church, would render this statement inadequate, or even altogether inapplicable, to their position and principles.

88. In the sense then, which has just been indicated, the Church has no holiness, except the individual holinesses (so to speak) of her members; has no gifts and graces to impart to them, but is, on the contrary, dowered and adorned by the graces and gifts which God accords to their faithful use of ordinances, and to their industry, itself a gift, in spiritual self-culture; the members are the fire, the Church is the material altar: and the dispensation of grace is given not to individuals through a visible community and in virtue of membership therein, but to individuals simply as penitent and believing men, and to communities only in a nominal sense, as containing those individuals

* See, however, the Westminster Confession of Faith, chap. xxv.

who have it; although, of course, they may exercise the external powers of discipline.

89. If such and such only were the nature of the visible Church, and of visible Churches, of Christ, I do not see that the name given or the name withheld, could be, upon its intrinsic merits, worth the labours, the pains of a contest, and the hazard of that bitterness which all differences upon matters of presumed concern are so apt to engender. The character of societies thus constituted, whether it be in itself a thing good or bad, or indifferent, is at least something quite apart from the Christian Church as represented in the records of ecclesiastical antiquity, and in the documents and institutions of the Church of England, which ascribes visibility and authority to the Church;* requires episcopal succession for the assumption of the ministry,† and teaches that sacraments have in themselves, are actually made up and composed of, two parts, one of which is an inward spiritual grace.‡

90. When a society, thus formed upon the modern notion, has ascertained to its own satisfaction that there is in an individual a principle of repentance and of faith, it then considers that he is a member of the body of Christ, the invisible Church; and it proceeds to make him, in its own sense, by baptism or otherwise, according to its peculiar tenets, a member likewise of the visible Church. Upon the principles of the Church, if such a man were baptized, I apprehend that he must be recognised as truly belonging to the body of Christ,

* Articles xix. and xx. † Preface to the Ordinal. ‡ Catechism.

although not having the advantage of regular union with that part of it which is visible, as not having lived in its communion: because his character would, according to the supposition, exhibit principles which can only spring in the human heart from the operation of the Holy Ghost, which there, so far as they are manifested, attest themselves; in a manner analogous to that of miracles in their distinct sphere. And this appears to be a conclusion independent in a great measure of the disputed question, whether unauthorised baptism be or be not valid.

91. When the fact of holiness is established, the inference of grace is certain. And this recognition, which Church principles will freely give, is all, I apprehend, which can be given to themselves by religious communities or Churches formed upon the principle that the visible constitution of the Church is something either wholly indeterminate, or, at all events, not empowered to convey to its members their spiritual gifts, and their title to salvation under the Christian covenant. To that invisible union with the body of the Redeemer, which alone the members of such communions claim in right of personal sanctity, I, at least, am not prepared to demur; on the other hand, that sacramental union which is taught by the Church, it seems that their own principles wholly repudiate.

92. Whatever other accessory facilities and advantages may accrue to them as members of their religious societies, from the strength of sympathy and example, from stated instruction, from institutions calculated to

stir up intrinsically devotion and faith and love, are all matters of fact, of which the fullest and most liberal recognition is, so far as appears to me, as entirely compatible with Catholic or Church principles as with any the most lax tenets. Although it is not safe to trust to the flexibility of a principle as the test of its truth, and though in strictness principle cannot well be flexible, yet is it sure that the truth when found will exhibit a capacity of self-adjustment and of adaptation to circumstances, such as no scheme of human invention can possess, though they may substitute those disingenuous adaptations which are effected by some compromise or other of the essence of truth, and which are therefore, sooner or later, self-destructive. And I am not aware of any limit to the application of the principle whereby persons of piety are recognised as united with Christ, except the existence of such a character, a limit which the objector himself will be forward to allege and maintain.

93. The true and comprehensive conception of the Church of Christ appears to be, as of a body, one part of which is visibly developed, and another part not so. Of course a spiritual life pervades the whole of it, both the visible and the invisible portions. The visibly developed portion is the Catholic Church on earth: which possesses, and by her ordinances conveys, spiritual life. To the invisible, the dead in Christ, from the time of our first parents until now, unchangeably belong; and they are united, though invisibly, with the members of the visible Church, in respect namely

of the common invisible life, by which both abide in the Redeemer. We cannot tell who of living men are thus truly and spiritually united with the visible Church. If they be holy, they are proved to be redeemed by Christ. If they be redeemed by Christ they have risen with Him, and they participate in His life. If they participate in His life, they are members of His body: and His body is but one, and is His Church.* Thus by God's inscrutable means the process may be wrought out, whereby men are truly in His Church, and yet not in it by virtue of belonging to such and such a society, which may be wanting in the essential characteristics of a church. Nor does such a theory as this leave them to God's uncovenanted mercies. On the contrary, it proceeds upon the very same and no other criterion of their effectual Church membership, which their own preferred opinions teach, and which their own societies adopt, namely, personal holiness; and it explains the term in the very same sense in which as its highest and only effectual sense the persons themselves and the societies would explain it, that is to say as membership of the invisible Church, which though it does not imply membership of the visible Church, implies something more; inasmuch as it implies that the relation to the Redeemer exists, not merely in its initial form, but that it has been developed and rooted in the faculties of the man and in the entire range of his character. Union in the Church by no means requires as one of its essential

* See Milner's 'End of Controversy,' pp. 202, 3. (12mo. 1830.)

conditions the consciousness and actual or possible communication of the persons united. For instance, we may cite the dead in Christ who have at least no known reciprocation of offices, no intercourse, with the living. Or, more appositely, the different parts of Christendom during the Roman schism of the fourteenth century. It is allowed by Romanists that the adherents of the different pontiffs, who excommunicated each his rival with his followers, were truly united in the Church of Christ, because all were united in intention to the see and the successor of Saint Peter.

94. I forbear from entering upon the question whether those whose case has here been contemplated, are also, provided they be baptized persons, or are not, members of the visible Church, in right of their baptism simply, while living apart from her communion, and perhaps under a rival system, as one on which I do not feel competent to enter, and which it is not necessary to discuss, inasmuch as its results are comprehended in the larger rule which has here been stated.

95. The Roman Catholics, who probably carry the exclusive doctrine farther than any other body of Christians, still are wont to explain themselves with important reservations. They will admit that individuals, nay that masses, as for example of the Russian and the English nations, really belong to Christ, and are, whether visibly or invisibly, yet truly of His Church, being excused from the guilt of schism by inevitable or invincible ignorance wherever it exists, a plea of which God is of course the final judge. And

I know not that there is anything intrinsically unjust or evasive in this explanation. It were heartily to be wished, that it were more understood among the generality of the people of their Churches, and the knowledge and application of it not confined, as it appears to be, to their theologians, and to such persons as are much more than ordinarily instructed in the details of their teaching. It does not appear to have descended from the chair and the school into the general body of popular opinion in Roman Catholic countries, which usually I believe proceeds upon the absolute assumption that persons without the papal pale have no better title to salvation than the unbaptized.

96. Thus much with respect to such of our fellow Christians, as have not placed themselves under a ministry authorised by commission from the Apostles; in order to show that Church principles go to deprive them of no substantial advantage which they enjoy, or claim to enjoy; however true it may be, on the other hand, that the acceptance of those principles might confer on them new advantages. And this is true, even although these principles compelled their holders absolutely to deny that the sacraments are effectual in all bodies wanting the succession, and that the bodies themselves are no parts of the true Church, that is to say, of the Church which conveys gifts of God to her members. But it is further to be remarked that they do not drive us to any such conclusion. Listen, for example, to the words of a great divine,

who, though deeply imbued with Catholic principles, and firmly holding the Apostolical succession, could even write as follows:

"Episcopal divines will readily subscribe to the determination of the learned Bishop of Winchester, in his answer to the Second Epistle of Molineus. 'Nevertheless, if our form (of episcopacy) be of Divine right, it doth not follow from thence, that there is not salvation without it, or that a Church cannot consist without it. He is blind who does not see Churches consisting without it; he is hard hearted who denieth them salvation. We are none of those hard-hearted persons, we put a great difference between these things. There may be something absent in the exterior regiment, which is of divine right, and yet salvation to be had. This mistake proceedeth from not distinguishing between the true nature and essence of a Church, which we do readily grant them, and the integrity or perfection of a Church, which we cannot grant them, without swerving from the judgment of the Catholic Church.'"*

And again listen to the sentiments of Archbishop Laud,† full, as it seems to me, alike of charity and of wisdom.

"'They which are misled and swayed with the current of the time, hold the same errors with their misleaders, yet not supinely. . . . . not uncharitably, but retaining an internal communion with the whole

* Archbishop Bramhall's Vindication of Grotius. Discourse iii.
† Conference with Fisher, sect. 36, p. 265.

visible Church of Christ, in the fundamental points of faith, and the performance of acts of charity; not factiously . . . . I say these, however misled, are neither heretics nor schismatics in the sight of God, and are therefore in a state for salvation."

97. The following may serve for a sketch of this part of the argument. As we see that it has pleased God to supply to individuals the want of that channel of ministerial gifts, which He Himself ordained to be used; and as, while knowing the fact, we know not precisely the manner, how can we tell but that He may have supplied it to them through the medium of the bodies to which they belong? Granting that when the position of such a body is truly schismatical, the supposition here suggested is very improbable; yet where, on the other hand, the case is one of necessity, all the presumptions are in its favour. For example, when men were most unjustly anathematised and excommunicated, as Luther; and when they had no choice but to forego Christian ordinances altogether, or to affirm as truths the grossest and most destructive abuses, against which their soul and conscience revolted: when under these circumstances they made the best arrangement of which circumstances admitted, acknowledging it (as Luther did*) to be an intermediate and provisional expedient; so far as human infirmity might dare to offer a conjecture, on a case not

* Even within a few days of his death and in one of his last acts Luther noted down certain matters of ecclesiastical arrangement to be reserved for a council of bishops.

expressly determined by Divine revelation, it would surely be to the effect that such a ministry would still enjoy the blessing of the Almighty, that the graces of His covenant would not be made void. But the question, who may be acting in contumacy and self-will, and who according to the light and the opportunities vouchsafed to them, is one for Him and not for us to determine.

98. In our own land indeed it is clear, that many have enrolled themselves in other religious societies, have joined their worship, and even received their Sacraments, without intending thereby to abandon their connection with the Church, although indeed under a grievous misunderstanding of the obligations which that connection entails. Again, it is not clear of all the separated societies themselves which exist among us, that they were schismatical in their origin, that is, that they were intended to be apart from, and to be in competition with, the Church: nor is it clear, though that is less to our present purpose, that even where there has been an undoubted schism, the guilt lay more with the seceders than with those who were the authors of their removal. But certain of these denominations, as the Wesleyan, for instance, neither professed nor contemplated anything which absolutely required to carry them out of the pale of the Church. These societies might, with caution and tenderness on all sides, perhaps have been made not only auxiliaries, but actual subordinate organisations of the Church, intended and calculated not to relax the bonds of her

communion, but to draw them closer around those individuals, who might find in them a resource conducive to their spiritual welfare. They might have been analogous to the rules of different orders in the church of Rome and in other churches, which enjoin many things left open by the Church at large, embracing a vast variety of details, and even passing under the name of so many distinct "religions:" yet all within the latitude which church unity allows. Would to God that they might yet in some happier day assume such a position! But further, even if the position of any society as such be schismatical, it does not at all follow, as Archbishop Laud has shown, that its members are schismatics. Yet it may follow in such a case, at least it is too probable, that those who brought or drove them into such a position are loaded with heavy criminality. How often are followers in religion less the imitators than the victims of their leaders, the real and deeply responsible

"Seminator' di scandali e di scismo!"*

But these are matters happily reserved to a truer and clearer judgment.

99. Perhaps, however, it may seem to some that, under the explanations here suggested, the essence of Church principles is allowed to escape, and that no substantial argument remains to be addressed to those who reject the apostolical succession for the purpose of inducing them to regard its possession as a high reli-

* Dante, Inferno.

gious privilege. This misapprehension it will now be endeavoured effectually to obviate. The privileges of the visible church of Christ, according to the representation which has here been given of them, are intrinsically of inestimable value and importance; although it be true that even these may through the perverseness of man be so mixed with the poison of false doctrine, not indeed as that their good shall be turned into evil, but as that their effects upon the average and mass of men shall be neutralised or more. The bequest of Christ to his people comprised two parts: a Word which was to be made up from the inspired writings of his followers; and a Church which his Apostles were to found; the last by no means less explicitly than the first. It is of the greatest moment to us, that we should possess this bequest of our Lord entire. And it is matter of the highest obligation to seek it in its best and purest form; and wherever there is a conflict between different forms to adhere to that not which most recommends itself to our natural inclination or worldly convenience, but which offers to us the most full and convincing evidence of its Divine authenticity.

100. Upon this principle, it remains a matter not less of obligation than of advantage, according to the foregoing arguments and conclusions, to place ourselves in spiritual connection with the apostolical and lawful ministry wheresoever it may be found; and if there be in the same place two religious communities each claiming historical derivation from the Apostles,

and each purporting to be the Catholic Church of the place, then that originally founded there and directly derived, must have the rightful authority, unless either it can be convicted of heresy according to the Catholic rule of faith, or exact unlawful terms of communion. This, however, is a question less material to the case now before us, which is as between a ministry possessing and a ministry wanting the apostolical commission.

101. Now let us briefly recal certain propositions. It appears that continuity of personal succession attaches as a definite condition to the nature of a church. It further appears by the consent of nearly all Protestants, that the Church of England exhibits a case where no charge of positive heresy exists to raise the question whether or not on that score its essence as a Church be destroyed. Once more, it appears that the condition above mentioned is one reducible to historical investigation, and that it is sufficiently established by the evidence which such examination supplies, in the particular instance. It surely follows that we may with moral certainty predicate of the Anglican Church, that she possesses the essence of a Church, in the sense which Catholic principles affix to that term. Upon the other hand, we have seen that we cannot absolutely predicate the reverse of societies which have not the Apostolical Succession. But neither is it easy positively to affirm it.

102. Respecting the individuals indeed who belong to those societies, and who bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, the case is different; upon evidence *à posteriori*

their union with the Redeemer may be positively asserted. But to the societies, as such, this argument will not apply. There are no signs by which we can certainly know whether these gifts to the individuals were or were not conveyed through their medium. God has nowhere tied Himself by any promise not to send His gifts except through the Apostles and their successors; although, according to the foregoing arguments, He has tied us to the duty of looking for His gifts in that channel, which His word has affirmatively indicated. But those gifts, if they come otherwise, may come immediately, for aught we know. Yet if the baptism administered by uncommissioned Christians be made effectual by Divine grace, this does not give authority or validity to the ministry of those who confer it. Thus, therefore, it does not appear that we can either categorically assert, or absolutely and without qualification deny, true Church essence of a religious society not chargeable with heresy in doctrine, simply because it has not the Apostolical Succession.

But, on the other hand, it does appear that the assertion may be absolutely made where the Apostolical commission is found; so that we have in the one case a positive attestation of the will of God, while in the other we are reduced, more or less, to conjecture.

103. The same law of the understanding, and, in moral subject matter, of the conscience, which binds us to prefer the true to the false, also binds us, and with precisely the same authority, to prefer the probable to the improbable, and the higher probability (which is in

substance the same thing) to the lower; so that where the question is between a ministry inheriting the Apostolical commission, and one devoid of it, even though we may think the latter to be probably valid and ratified in the sight of God, yet we may not acquiesce in it; if there be other conditions capable of realisation, and such as seem to remove all doubt as regards the former, and to bring its claim up to the standard of moral certainty; and acquiescence under such circumstances to one so impressed, is a manifest sin. Nor is this argument in any degree void of its applicability, when it may be thought that the episcopal succession (being within reach) is indeed the more probably Apostolical and valid, but yet only by a few degrees, or even by one, of probability. That one degree of superior probability, when discerned, imposes it upon us as a matter of obligation to adhere to the Episcopal Succession, and leaves us, if we disregard it, guilty of a sin.

104. The difference therefore between the hypothetical and the historical title to the ministry is most practical and momentous. Just so we are not entitled absolutely to deny of the Apocryphal books, that they are Divinely inspired; but because the evidence of their reception from ancient testimony is held by the Church of England to be insufficient, she is thereby bound to deny them admittance into the Sacred Canon, as truly as she would be obliged to exclude them if their inspiration were demonstratively disproved. To choose between two manifest errors is a miserable alternative; but it is clear that under such circumstances

even utterly to deny their inspiration would be less injurious than without warrant to assert it.

Let us suppose that a parent is feeding a child, and before him are placed various meats of which he has no actual experience; one has the aspect of poison, and he sets it aside; of another he is doubtful whether it be nourishing and wholesome, and such as it has been recommended him to give, or whether it be void of sustenance and little able to sustain and invigorate life; were there no other he would use this in preference to none: but if there be a third whose kind he knows upon sufficient testimony to be unquestionably wholesome, does he not, as a matter of course, and as a matter of duty, having the free and perfect option, without the smallest scruple or exception, choose the food of certain and reject that of doubtful wholesomeness? And such is the analogy between ordinances certainly and historically known to be administered by Divine authority, and ordinances hypothetically conjectured to be so administered.

105. We are not then obliged by Church principles, as they have been stated, to regard men, on the simple ground that they are exercising the functions of the Christian ministry without the apostolical commission, as acting schismatically, nor the societies to which they belong, as without doubt severed from the Church, unless there be other circumstances which unfavourably modify their case. Nor does Scripture drive us to that painful resort. It tells us, indeed, of * Korah,

* Numbers xvi.

Dathan and Abiram, who usurping presumptuously the office of the lawful priests of God, were swallowed up for their temerity. It tells us again of the sons of Sceva,* who invoking without warrant the name of the Lord Jesus, over them that had evil spirits, were overcome by a man so afflicted, and were obliged to fly naked and wounded. But these are not the only cases recorded for our instruction. The Evangelists, St. Mark and St. Luke,† have both related the case of one who cast out devils in our Saviour's name, but who followed not with the Apostles, and whom therefore they forbade. Yet the work seems to have been accepted by our Lord, as an evidence of the man's truth; and He said, "Forbid him not; for there is no man that can do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me; for he that is not against us is on our part." But it is right to observe that whatever softening influences may be drawn from these passages, as respects the cases of those whose circumstances are in any degree analogous, it is not clear that they can have any force in justifying persons who establish a ministry not in aid of, but in rivalship and opposition to, that of the successors of the Apostles.

106. And now to sum up what has been said upon the last of the four propositions belonging to this head of charge.

While Church principles take away nothing whatever from those professors of religion who repudiate the doctrine of real spiritual powers in the visible

* Acts xix. 13—17. † Mark ix. 38—40. Luke x. 49, 50.

Church of Christ; to those who hold that doctrine they greatly enlarge and corroborate the affirmative evidence of the blessed truth that they are in covenant with God and in union with Christ, after the manner and with all the securities which His love devised. They give to them a surer and a simpler way of access to the Redeemer, less beset with the snares of spiritual pride; they set forth with the liveliest energy the weight of their responsibility; they develop, on all sides, new and larger views of that place in which the Lord hath set their feet; they take nothing from any other man, but they make their possessors rich indeed. It is of course an important incident that they are qualified to act with proportionate power upon the neglectful, the lukewarm, and the profligate, but this is a point less applicable to the present argument.

107. Meanwhile we may, on grounds the most unequivocal and solid, rejoice to see with what warmth of sentiment every kind of protest has been entered on the part of Presbyterian and other Protestant Christians, against all real or supposed attempts to impeach the validity of their sacraments, or the formal claim of their communions to the appellation of Churches of Christ. I for one have witnessed with great delight, not indeed the ebullitions of resentment, however excusable, nor the misapprehensions and even very gross misstatements of obnoxious arguments with which such protests may, in some instances, have been accompanied, but the evidence which they afford of latent agreement with their antagonists, upon the very

points where they believe themselves most to differ, of a fundamental concord which is thus shown still truly to subsist, however much impaired or hidden by those conspicuous and sometimes superficial diversities which alone meet the eye of the hasty observer.

108. For if the popular sectarian definitions of a Church and of Sacraments were correct, there would absolutely be no matter in controversy between us. Those who deny that any spiritual powers and privileges belong to the visible Church in its corporate character, need not, one should have anticipated, feel much anxiety and far less any indignation, even if it be categorically held that the religious communities into which they have formed themselves are not, in their corporate capacity, so endowed with spiritual powers and privileges. And yet those who have pushed the arguments from Catholic principles to the extremest lengths, have gone, and can go, no farther than this. No one has ever dreamed of denying those communities to be Churches in the sense in which alone they themselves, through their controversialists, hold that any body of Christians can form a Church, namely, as a spontaneous association upon the basis of belief in Christ and in the Scriptures, attended sometimes with the additional test of an experience and life conformable thereto. Such persons, whether they allow that Church government may be settled by consent, and need not rest on Divine ordinance, or whether they profess to derive it from the authority of revelation, always confine the functions of the visible Church

to what is external, and in strict consistency they ought themselves to be the first to contend for themselves that they are not Churches in the sense ascribed to the term on the other side, namely, as actual portions of the body of Christ, depositories of His grace, and administering it to those whom they receive within their pale by the Sacrament of Baptism. But so far are they from upholding such a doctrine, that they repudiate it with warmth, and that they visit with equal reprobation the broad explicit assertion, and all reasonings however qualified and limited, which may be held or suspected to tend in the same direction.

109. Again, with regard to the sacraments of the Church. What means the denial of their validity? Those Christian bodies in this country who have renounced or lost the Apostolical succession, hold respecting the Sacraments (and their theory has not been without partial support from individual ministers at least of the Anglican communion*) that they are signs; signs alone, though beautifully significant indeed, and calculated to edify, by instructing and exciting those who receive them. But now if they be *only* signs, who doubts that the signs are as real in bodies which have no episcopacy or succession, as in those which have? If they be only signs, attended with that kind of effect in increasing faith and love, which belongs to their significancy and impressiveness, who doubts that an individual Christian repairing with true faith and love to a reli-

* See the Rev. Thomas Scott's Commentary on the Bible. John iii 3, and Titus iii. 5.

gious celebration, will derive from it the spiritual advantages which its own nature coinciding with his prepared temper and his dependence upon God, and his earnest supplications, may be calculated to produce? This question raised by some respecting the validity or invalidity of their sacraments, has reference to a very different conception of those august institutions; to a theory which ascribes to them the possession of graces inherent by divine appointment, in order to whose effectual communication, penitence, and faith, are indeed conditions in the adult, but which, when there is no bar raised against their entrance by a disobedient will, are proved to be capable of operating through means additional to, and in so far independent of, the understanding, by the fact that one at least of them is applicable to infants.

110. Why is it then that these classes of our fellow-Christians have so warmly protested against what they themselves have taught? Why having denied an intrinsic value in Sacraments, and the inherence of spiritual powers in the visible Church, do they shrink from the remotest approach to an application of these their speculations to their own cases? It is not, as I believe, from the love of controversy, or from antipathy to their opponents, or from ignorance, or from spiritual pride; but it is because the instincts of men are often wiser than their understandings,—because that which the grace of God has taught them is not utterly effaced by the floods of shallow argumentation,—and now being put to the test they betray their indistinct but real

consciousness that there should be in the hands of the Church, in order to make it truly and fully a Church, an actual possession of spiritual powers historically transmitted to her by her Lord; and that, within the external forms of the Sacraments, there is an abiding of those essential graces, which He has purchased with His precious blood. In their indignant reclamations therefore I see a ground, not of rival indignation, but of rejoicing; and a real, if yet infant, hope of ultimate agreement.

SECTION IV.—THIRD OBJECTION.

111—5. Objection III. generally stated and answered. 116—8. Specific reply. 119—29. Injurious influences upon Church principles subsequent to the Revolution of 1688, and consequent decay then as at some earlier periods. 130. Illustrative facts. 131—6. Corresponding decay of general doctrine. 137. Why freely stated. 138—42. Other proofs of decay. 143—58. Reaction first in general doctrine, next in Church principles: temporary excess, and permanent tendency to good in both. 159—66. Illustration from the controversy prevailing in Scotland.

111. The third and now only remaining imputation against Church principles is, that they tend to introduce division into the communion of the Church,* or even to provoke an actual and formal schism. This

* There are some excellent remarks on this subject in the valuable work of the Rev. W. Gresley, entitled 'The Portrait of a Churchman.' The train of reasoning is one long familiar to my mind, or I should not have been ashamed to borrow from such a source. Some kindred observations are to be found in the Charge of the present Dean of Chichester, May, 1839, pp. 23, 4.

of all the three is the most peculiar, the worst supported, and the most easily exposed.

112. First let us consider the supposed tendency to produce schism or separation from the communion of the Church. It can hardly be meant that the holders of Church principles are themselves likely to abandon that communion; inasmuch as this would be to ascribe to them the total inability to comprehend, or the positive intention to disobey that obligation to abide with the Church of God, which, of all others, they have most unequivocally taught, and their teaching which has brought upon them the most plentiful reproach.

113. But is it meant that, by teaching men the duty of remaining in the Church, they will induce them to withdraw from its pale? Thus it has recently been argued, and that by a writer of the greatest ability,* that the French have become an irreligious people because religion lent its aid to their governments, and thereby assumed the aspect of compulsion, so that it seemed a thing to be repudiated without inquiry into its merits. This argument seems to rely on some such postulate as the following: that man is a being who will do right if he be let alone, but who will certainly do wrong if he be told what is right, and that he is even bound or compelled to do it. To the subject-matter of duty, according to this theory, he has no particular objection, but the law of duty he cannot for an instant tolerate. To this postulate I demur. It

* M. de Tocqueville, Democratie en Amerique.

seems to be as nearly as may be an exact inversion of the truth, although in particular cases it may hold good; under a faithful inculcation of the law of duty men will generally do right, and without it will almost certainly do wrong. The faithful inculcation of duty will not fail to produce positive results in accordance with that duty; and therefore if there be any security in great moral laws, the fuller inculcation of the duty of abiding in the Church will the more dispose and induce men to abide there.

114. But is it meant that Church principles will so alter the aspect of the Church, that men who do not receive them will find her to be another than what they had believed, and themselves therefore already in virtual separation from her, and will seek elsewhere the antitype of their ideal? If such be the form of the objection, I firmly believe that the apprehension is groundless: firstly, because Church principles are far from implying any alteration in the Church, and only aim at imbuing her members with the fuller understanding of her constitution. And it is not to be supposed of an intelligent people, that their impressions of that constitution generally are not merely imperfect representations of its real essence, but totally at variance with it. Secondly, because experience tells us of many whom Catholic principles have brought and retained within her pale; but of none whom, for ages past, they have driven from it. And thirdly, if they be true, as in this place may now be assumed, Christian faith binds us to believe that, according to God's good pleasure,

their attraction will be found much stronger than their repulsive influence.

115. So much, then, for schism; and now as respects divisions of opinion within the Church. Undoubtedly the Reformation of the sixteenth century was charged, and was fairly chargeable, with dividing opinions in the Church; and indeed the original preaching of Christianity itself was that which turned the world upside down, and more than any other event in the history of men laid its propagators open to this imputation. But the answer was conclusive and manifold then. As thus: that the alterations proposed were founded on truth; that the benefit to flow from truth must be greater than the evil to flow from the divisions, of which, through the perverseness of men, it is made the occasion; that the final effect of truth must be by temporary division to arrive at ultimate union, whereas the sufferance of religious error could only purchase a false and hollow as well as short-lived tranquillity at the expense of a long futurity of discord; and lastly, that the pains and mischiefs of the division are chargeable in equity not upon the returning truth which merely claims her own, but upon the usurping untruth which has excluded and would still exclude her.

116. These are answers of a general kind which may fairly be made to the charge of creating divisions by the advocates of any doctrine claiming to be catholic or true; but there are also the materials of a reply more specific, and appertaining in particular to the Church principles with which we are here concerned.

The supposition with which we have to deal is this: that the principles in question must necessarily induce alienation of spirit from that portion of our brethren in the Church (many of them among its best and holiest members) who do not wholly concur in the principles that one or another writer may have promulgated as catholic concerning the Church, the sacraments, and the ministry. May God forbid so monstrous a perversion! and may His wisdom provide against its arising in however small a degree, as such results are but too apt to arise, out of the simple fact that it is anticipated! In the first place, there is no fixed code of belief, that I am aware of, on these subjects, independent of the authorised documents of the Church of this country. In them we have established for us the basis of unity in her ministry and her communion. It is not in the nature of things, alas! that all truths should be felt alike by all persons and at all times. Now, even suppose a man assumes, and it is the greatest assumption any man has a right to make, that he is in advance of some among his brethren in his apprehension of some particular truths, and that seeing their outlines and their complexion more clearly, and to himself more satisfactorily, he is desirous of leading others to partake the benefit: it is quite manifest that such a conception is not the introduction of new but the development of old and perhaps suppressed principles; and that he draws them from a fountain-head common to his brethren with himself: his object, therefore, must be to induce them to draw the same comfort from the same source; but

if, instead of that, he either wilfully attempts or acts consciously in such a manner as to drive them to another communion, then, indeed, he must raise a suspicion of his temper if not his motives; and he proceeds in a mode not less out of conformity with logical consistency, than with the spirit of Christian brotherhood.

117. In truth, unity of opinion upon the numerous and continually multiplying points that are opened by an inspection of Christian doctrine, though good and desirable, is very hard, considering the differences of our mental constitutions, to maintain; and further, so that the opinion be not contumacious, nor touch the declared foundation of religion, we know not that it is absolutely requisite. But yet it is desirable to be always approximating to it, or rather it is desirable to set in action some countervailing power, which may neutralise the perpetual tendency to creation of new differences from the new combinations into which human thought is perpetually thrown. In short, varieties of theological opinion, though tolerable within certain limits, are fatal beyond those limits, and are always dangerous on account of their tendency to overstep the boundary; and as they have a self-multiplying and self-extending principle in themselves, so they absolutely call for strong moral checks upon this tendency by way of security. Now, if it be allowed that this security is found in the existence of creeds, yet there is a further security required and given to creeds themselves in the principle of that unity which is termed external, and which consists in the attachment

to "one body" as well as "one spirit." The beauty of this command is in its facility, and its effects; because when obeyed it reminds us of our duty, and urges us by our badges and our privileges which are in close and inseparable connection with our duty, to labour after that entire conformity with Christ which is not only demonstrated but furthered by the unity on earth that He has commanded to be observed. And these securities it is the specific purpose of the principles we are now considering to exhibit and to enforce.

118. Thus, therefore, it appears that Church principles, although they cannot prevent differences of opinion, yet powerfully tend to keep them within certain bounds, and so to limit the amount of division of this kind: and further, and yet most powerfully, by laying down the law of communion in the Church as a high religious principle, they mitigate the quality and effects of that division; for they teach men to place communion above opinion, as a surer bond of union, and as a higher law. Over and above the general duty of co-operation under the comprehensive principle of Christian charity, those who know that in the Church they are made partakers of a new, a holy, and a common life, are more especially obliged to act in common for the purpose of giving effect to the impulses of that life. They are not free to say, with consistency, that because such an individual holds this or that opinion, therefore they will not act with him, even for objects independent of it, inasmuch as it is an opinion which they have seen fit to proscribe: and their code leaves no

limit upon the duty of co-operation except the point at which such co-operation would involve the direct compromise of some real or apparent truth. And in practice it is wonderful how, within the last few years, the more general and rapidly growing comprehension of Church principles has actually produced these results; approximation of opinion, deep consciousness of agreement in faith, strong sense of brotherhood, and general concurrence in the pursuit of the great purposes of the Church and of religion. I, for one, should be content that the charge of a tendency to divide the Church should be tried by a fair inspection of even those experimental results which the present time supplies; although I anticipate much more from the future.

119. Some attention, however, to the history of religious opinion in this country since the Revolution of 1688 will lead us to a clearer view of the bearing of Church principles upon the internal welfare of the Church.

We owe to the Revolution of 1688, besides many and great civil blessings, the immediate deliverance of our Church from the violent assaults of Romanism, aimed directly at her constitution. We must not make it a matter of surprise, nor suffer it to create in our minds any prejudice against those who were concerned in that great event, if we find that its consequences exposed the Church to dangers of slower and much less palpable operation, yet issuing, if they had not been intercepted, in equal, or, if it be possible, even more

pernicious results than those then threatened. Just as one might argue of the deliverance of the early Church from temporal persecutions, that it tended to introduce the corrupting influence of wealth, and to relax salutary discipline, to lower the spirit of devotion, and to bring back the Church into the captivity of that world which it was ordained to resist and to conquer; and yet that deliverance was in itself a blessing, and must be acknowledged as a blessing though it was abused, and its authors must in justice be regarded as benefactors of the Church.

From the period, then, of the Revolution downwards, and owing in great measure to its attendant circumstances, the tone of Church principles was grievously lowered and relaxed. I shall attempt to assign some at least of the more specific causes of this disastrous change; and I need only notice in passing another source of the religious declension of the last century, which is better known, namely, a reaction from the real or supposed excesses of puritanism; together with a somewhat blind and undistinguishing antipathy to the Roman Church, which was regarded with justice as the parent of our intestine troubles.

120. Firstly, the great bulk of the clergy were unfavourable to the exclusion of James II., or at least of his posterity, from the throne. They did not conceive themselves authorised to take any step with respect to his unlawful designs and commands, beyond a purely defensive refusal of obedience, or, as it has been denominated, passive resistance. The natural effect was

this: that the idea of strong Church principles, of which the clergy were of course the hereditary and appointed defenders, came, when the Revolution had taken full effect, to be associated in the minds of the ruling powers, and of the influential portions of the nation, with disaffection to the existing order of things: and consequently so far fell into disrepute together with that disaffection.

121. Secondly, the bishoprics and posts of distinction were naturally filled from the ranks of that portion of the clergy who were friendly to the claims of the reigning family, and who formed but a very small minority of the body; who were also generally lukewarm in the support of Church principles. We must consider the operation of this cause in more ways than one. In the first place, the current of temporal inducements, which we must expect to discover running with more or less of strength in every system, set entirely against those views of the Church which had so eminently distinguished the preceding century. Further:* discipline in the Church, and particularly over the clergy, could only be maintained either by a severe administration, or by a general congeniality between the bishops and the inferior orders. But congeniality there was none; and severity was foreign to the genius of the new system; therefore relaxation, the only remaining alternative, was the prevailing consequence. And thus it also happened, lastly, that each order of the clergy was placed, in convocation, in a

* Lord Mahon's History of England, vol. ii. p. 370.

false position; the bishops, who were generally friendly to the Revolution, and to a less strict tone of Church principle, were called upon to become, from their position, the ordinary defenders of episcopal rights against the lower House, and thus gave a new tone to the manner of that defence: while the members of this latter body who ought, from their general views of Church polity, to have upheld such rights with the greatest tenacity, and placed them on a very high ground, had a separate and transverse interest in respect of their political bias, which induced them in some measure to aim at working out a sort of parliamentary relation to their ecclesiastical superiors, resembling that of the House of Commons to the House of Lords.*

122. Thirdly, as the return of Popery was the danger from which, in respect of religion, the Revolution of 1688 had been the instrument of deliverance, so the dread of its recurrence continued very much to engross the popular mind, especially so long as the exiled family continued to contemplate and even to attempt by military means, or by any kind of negotiation, the recovery of the throne. For defence against a contingency so formidable, it was naturally desired to unite all those who participated in the desire to resist all such endeavours.† That is to say, all those, who were pledged by the common bond of Protestant-

* Synodus Anglicana, by Dr. Gibson (Lond. 1702).

† See, for example, Bishop Hoadly's Letter to a Clergyman on the Bill against occasional conformity, 1703.

ism to an unity at least of opposition to the Roman religion. Hence the intermediate position of the Church of England came to be more or less disregarded or forgotten, and she was viewed as belonging to one of the extremes; hence she was considered rather as a Protestant than as a reformed Catholic Church; and the former of these designations began to be applied to her by state authority. Her well-defined and positive principles were gradually resolved into a vague and lax and chiefly negative conception.

123. Fourthly, the recognition of Presbyterianism in Scotland as the established religion of the country, and perhaps also its partial endowment in Ireland, of course tended ultimately to depreciate in the view of the nation, the religious importance of the episcopal government and succession. And the rigorous measures of repression which came at length to be adopted against the Episcopal Communion of Scotland, not only went nearly to extinguish a body by whom the principles of the Church were firmly held, but must likewise have additionally tended to lower the tone of the public mind, and indispose it to recognise the importance of those principles.

124. Fifthly. Patronage and influence now came to be adopted as the substitutes for prerogative in the civil government of the country. Such being the case, it was scarcely possible but that the ministers of the Crown should incline to use the ecclesiastical patronage entrusted to their hands, for the purpose mainly of promoting political interests, and that the Crown

itself should as a general rule give its sanction to the practice. It is equally clear that a low and secular tone of thought in the Church itself, and in its ministers especially, could not but be, however limited by the counterforces of higher motives, the results of a system so vicious.

125. Sixthly. After a long continuance of external conflicts, the Church now appeared to have reached a haven; and wearied with the storms without, and rejoiced at their cessation, she forgot that warfare was the perpetual law of her earthly condition; she drank of the cup of temporal prosperity, and slackened in her fervour against the enemies of her Lord, worldliness and sin in all their forms.

126. Seventhly. When the meetings of the Convocation were finally suspended by the act of the minister of the day, the Church lost the last visible representation of her intrinsic unity and power; and has remained from that time debarred of the exercise of her proper legislative functions, dependent upon expedients unsafe in principle, and only under the most advantageous circumstances tolerable in practice; while the hands of her rulers, when acting individually in their executive capacity, have been extremely weakened by the fact that they have appeared, for the most part, as if they had no other and higher character than that of great officers of state for ecclesiastical purposes. The actual realisation of the effects which the above-mentioned causes were calculated to produce is placed historically beyond dispute. We see, indeed, the clergy

—but, alas! sometimes rather by the zeal of its lower order, than of that appointed to paramount authority—endeavouring in convocation to sustain the tone both of Church principles and of other doctrine; of the truths relating to the person of our blessed Lord, in 1714, against Dr. Samuel Clarke;* and again in 1718, when the last effort was made, with reference to Church power, against Bishop Hoadly. It is consolatory at least to know, that the influence of patronage alone was not sufficient to effect the relaxation of the ancient principles, and that the violent measure of stifling the voice of the Church by the indefinite suspension to all practical purposes of her lawfully-constituted assembly, could alone attain that end.

127. Now, the fact to which I would most earnestly entreat the attention of all my brethren in the Church is this: that a rapid and great declension in the tone of all the doctrines of religion, a great increase of glaring abuse, and a miserable debasement of the entire religious action of the Church, followed closely upon the declension of those particular doctrines which belong to the constitution and ordinances of the Church. Where these continued to be verbally professed, they fell in too many cases into lifeless and degenerate forms.† Thus, for instance, the solemn and most sti-

* Although, however, the upper House of Convocation appears to have accepted, at the moment, an equivocal apology from Dr. Clarke, royal injunctions were issued in the same year, to the effect that no preacher should presume to teach respecting the blessed Trinity, otherwise than according to the Scriptures, the three creeds, and the thirty-nine articles. Cardwell's Documentary Annals, II., 365.

† It is a painful illustration of this proposition, that a work which

mulating truth of baptismal regeneration became, in the mouths of many, little more than an apology for sheer lukewarmness in religion; a substitute, instead of an introduction, to the habitual operation of the Holy Ghost upon the souls of men.

128. Nor, in acknowledging these facts, so full of the lessons of humility, is it at all implied that the Church had lost anything of her essence. She still proclaimed the truth, by the Scriptures, to the people, and by the perpetual voice of her Liturgy, and Offices, and Articles; she still offered to God a pure and holy worship; she still dispensed the grace of the Sacraments. Nay, there were still among her ministers many audible and doubtless many more retired witnesses of a true confession, as with respect to other doctrines, so (Bishops Butler and Horne, for example) with respect to those which concern the Church of Christ. All, however, that man could do to impair her power and degrade her from her high calling, man did do; though the providence of God was still in silence preparing for her, in a coming generation, the exercises of perplexity and suffering; and with them, and by them, the renovation and enlargement of her spiritual fruitfulness.

129. It would not be difficult to show, from the writings of eminently devout men of the Roman communion, that they have frequently been led to lament

has been sanctioned by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and which purports to explain the Church Catechism, should contain this question and answer:—"Q. How can we receive the body and blood of Christ? A. We cannot receive his real body and blood."—Crossman's Explanation of the Church Catechism.

a visible declension in the actual life and in the teaching of the Church, quite as palpable to their view as that which has been here alluded to. It is thus, for instance, that Bossuet exhibits to us the descriptions, by Saint Bernard and others, of the abuses of their own times.*

"'Qui me donnera,' disoit St. Bernard, 'que je voie, avant que de mourir, l'Eglise de Dieu comme elle étoit dans les premiers jours.' Si ce saint homme a eu quelque chose à regretter en mourant, ç'a été de n'avoir pas vu un changement si heureux. . . .

"Dès le temps du concile de Vienne, un grand évêque, chargé par le Pape de préparer les matières qui devoient y être traitées, mit pour fondement de l'ouvrage de cette sainte assemblée, qu'il y falloit réformer l'Eglise dans le chef et dans les membres."

Cardinal Julian wrote to Eugene IV., he continues:—

"Je vois, que la coignée est à la racine, l'arbre penche: et au lieu de le soutenir pendant qu'on le pourroit encore, nous le précipitons à terre. . . .

"Les corps périront avec les âmes. Dieu nous ôte la vue de nos périls, comme Il a coutume de faire à ceux qu' Il veut punir: le feu est allumé devant nous, et nous y courons."

* Histoire des Variations, I. i. I would refer to the first two books of Ranke's History of the Popes for many illustrations of the strong sense which the best men of the Church of Rome entertained of her decay and corruption at the period of the Reformation. See also Essays on the Church, pp. 13—16, and Palmer's Compendious Church History, p. 91.

And an eminent and zealous living ecclesiastic, the Padre Ventura, writes thus, in the Appendix to a Sermon on the Beatification of St. Martin de Porres, with respect to the state of things among the clergy in Rome itself, at the period of the Reformation:—

"Il patriarca del regolar chiericato, San Gaetano Tiene il primo altresì in quel secolo scosse come da un profondo letargo il Cristianesimo, vi eccitò lo spirito di santità e di fede, e promosse la pratica di tutte le virtù, e lo sviluppo di tutte le verità.

"Opera pure del Tiene fu la riforma del clero nel secolo decimo sesto. Poichè da prima, fu esso che col suo esempio lo richiamò al esercizio della predicazione, di cui arrossiva; essendo stato egli il primo prete secolare di quel tempo, che comparse in pulpito qui in Roma, in cotta e berretto, ad annunziare la Divina parola." *

Of course these witnesses did not intend to admit that there was therefore any breach in the continuity of the spiritual life, faith, and power of the Church.

130. Having, then, endeavoured to fix attention on the fact that the corruption and decay of Church principles were nearly simultaneous, and closely connected, with a similar corruption and decay of other doctrine, I would now slightly sketch each of these in its turn. And first, as regards the former: Hoadly—whose latitudinarianism might more plausibly be pleaded by Romanists against the Church, than Bishop Goodman's

* Panegirico in onore del Beato Martino de Porres, dal Rmo P. D. G. Ventura, Roma, 1838, pp. 7 and 65.

tendencies to Romanism by Protestants—in his Sermon on "the Nature of the Kingdom or Church of Christ;"* in his "Preservative,"† and in his "Answer to the Representation of the Committee appointed by the Lower House of Convocation,"‡ reduced to form the heterodox ecclesiastical opinions. They continued to prevail so far as greatly to influence the common sentiment throughout the century. They seem to have reached their climax about the time when Archdeacon Blackburn published the Confessional, in 1766, arguing for release from all subscription excepting to a general formula of assent to the Scriptures, and for a general review of the documents of the Church, in particular of her Trinitarian forms.§ Many of those, who defended subscription, maintained it on the ground that it was compatible with the reservation of an almost indefinite license of interpretation; so that it may almost seem difficult to make a choice between the friends and the foes of the practice. In 1772 a petition was presented to Parliament, signed by certain laymen, and, even in those non-petitioning days, by 250 clergymen, praying for release from subscription. It was rejected by a majority of 217 to 71; but apparently upon grounds and arguments, for the most part, of a secular cast,‖ giving

* London, 1717.

† "Preservative against the Principles and Practices of the Nonjurors." (4th Edition, London, 1718.)

‡ London, 1718.

§ Confessional, p. 359.

‖ Mr. Fordyce writes to Dr. Doddridge in 1739, on occasion of the debate respecting the repeal of the Test Act, that "Mr. Danvers said, in his usual jocular way, that it was a *ceremony* to take off one's hat

little or no evidence, as far as we can judge from the records of the discussion, of any real appreciation of the true principles upon which this essential practice rests. In this period it was that the great Lord Chatham ventured to describe his Church as having a Popish Liturgy, Calvinistic articles, and an Arminian clergy; a shallow witticism, little worthy of so illustrious a man, in which grains of truth are mingled and lost in masses of delusion. When we put together with the avowed abandonment of the true Church principles by a large body of the clergy, the timidity of their assertors, and the inert unmeaning forms which they assumed in the unreflecting majority of those who still gave them a nominal adhesion, we sigh for the past; but we must also the more appreciate those deep-seated elements of vitality, which have not failed in due time to recover the Church from her states of partial decadence.

131. And now to proceed to the proofs of a contemporaneous decline in doctrine and in practice. The facts of the case are indeed so generally acknowledged, that it might seem almost unnecessary to attest the declension of religion during the last century by particular citations, calculated to show that doctrine in general partook of the blight which had smitten the old and acknowledged principles of our Church polity. But the

upon going into a church, which nobody, however, scrupled to comply with; and that he could not comprehend why people made any scruple about eating and drinking with one another, in the same place, which is just such another ceremony!" Doddridge's Correspondence, iii. 367.

circumstances are too grievous, the danger of false witness too serious, the bearing upon the present argument too important, to admit of their being allowed to remain in doubt.*

132. †Bishop Burnet writes in 1712:

"I cannot look on without the deepest concern, when I see the imminent ruin hanging over this Church, and by consequence over the whole reformation. The outward state of things is black enough, God knows; but that which heightens my fears rises chiefly from the inward state into which we are unhappily fallen." And he proceeds to describe the extreme ignorance and carelessness of the clergy in general.

‡Bishop Gibson complains, in 1728:

"That profaneness and impiety are grown bold and open."

Dr. Calamy writes, in 1730:

"A real decay of serious religion, both in the Church and out of it, was very visible."

In 1731 Nathaniel Neal (son of the author of the History of the Puritans) wrote a tract entitled, "A Free and Serious Remonstrance to Dissenting Ministers, on occasion of the Decay of Religion;" intended

* See on this subject the First Chapter of the Volume called "The Centenary of Wesleyan Methodism," published in 1839, where some of these citations may be found. The Charge of Dr. Dealtry, September, 1838, and its Appendix. Lord Mahon's History of England, vol. ii. pp. 366—73.

† Preface to the Third Edition of the Pastoral Care.

‡ Pastoral Letters, 2nd edit. p. 2.

by the author only for private distribution, but published by Job Orton in 1775. Dr. Doddridge published, in 1730, but anonymously, "Free Thoughts on the most probable Methods of Reviving the Dissenting Interest." Dr. Leland writes to Dr. Doddridge (June 19, 1740) of the low and languid state of religion in Dublin. In the same year Dr. D. gives an account of a meeting of dissenting ministers to consult as to what might be done "for the revival of religion in their respective congregations."*

† Bishop Butler writes, in 1736:

"It is come, I know not how, to be taken for granted by many persons, that Christianity is not so much as a subject of inquiry; but that it is now at length discovered to be fictitious. And accordingly they treat it as if, in the present age, this were an agreed point among all people of discernment; and nothing remained, but to set it up as a principal subject of mirth and ridicule, as it were by way of reprisals, for its having so long interrupted the pleasures of the world." We may well estimate the force of this passage, by considering how impossible it would be for any observer to make such a statement of the prevailing tone of society in the present day.

133. In 1738, Archbishop Secker ‡ writes:

"An open and professed disregard to religion is become, through a variety of unhappy causes, the distin-

* Doddridge's Correspondence, iii. 548.
† Advertisement to the Analogy.
‡ Eight Charges, in Secker's Works, vol. v. p. 300.

guishing character of the present age. This evil is grown to a great height in the metropolis of the nation; is daily spreading through every part of it; and, bad in itself as any can be, must of necessity bring in all others after it. Indeed it hath already brought in such dissoluteness and contempt of principle in the highest part of the world, and such profligate intemperance, and fearlessness of committing crimes, in the lower, as must, if this torrent of impiety stop not, become absolutely fatal. And God knows, far from stopping, it receives, through the ill designs of some persons, and the inconsiderateness of others, a continual increase. Christianity is now ridiculed and railed at, with very little reserve, and the teachers of it without any at all. . . . . The consequence hath been, as it naturally must, that disregard to us hath greatly increased the disregard to public worship and instruction; that many are grown prejudiced against religion; nay more, indifferent about it, and unacquainted with it. . . . ."

And again, " Regard to piety is strangely lost, even amongst persons that are otherwise tolerably serious."

The charges of this excellent prelate extend over the whole period from 1738 to 1766, and they exhibit a melancholy picture throughout of the state both of discipline and of doctrine. In his last address to his clergy he boldly declares:—" We have, in fact, lost many of our people to sectaries, by not preaching in a manner sufficiently evangelical; and shall neither recover them from the extravagances into which they

have run, nor keep more from going over to them, but by returning to the right way: *declaring all the counsel of God;* and that principally, *not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth.*"*

134. In 1756 Bishop Horne† writes:

"It is the complaint of hundreds of serious and pious Christians, that there is at present not only a lamentable relaxation of discipline in the Church,‡ but (what is indeed the consequence of it) as lamentable a falling off from the old way of preaching and expounding the word of God. Let any one read the sermons of the primitive fathers, and our divines that lived in the times succeeding the Reformation, who preached from the fathers as the fathers did from the Scriptures, and compare their discourses with those of this last century, and they must pronounce one or other of them to be many removes from Christianity."

Jones, of Nayland, the bishop's biographer, breaks into similar complaints.

The "Centenary of Wesleyan Methodism," a volume published in 1839 by the representatives of the body, says§ of the early part of the century:

"It was unquestionably the most unevangelical period that had ever occurred in this country since the

* Eighth Charge, 1766. Works, vol. v. p. 430.

† Apology for certain gentlemen in the University (of Oxford).

‡ I find however that there were still relics of older usages. Thus, n the parish of Hawarden in Flintshire, under a Jacobite rector (Williams), there is a record of a case of excommunication and penance, for incontinency, in the year 1750. This parish is a peculiar.

§ Chap. i. p. 3.

Reformation was completed in the reign of Elizabeth. Infidelity was extremely prevalent both in the form of downright blasphemy and of philosophical speculation. Strenuous efforts were also then made by several ecclesiastics to introduce deadly heresy into the Church of God."

And the report is corroborated by a body of extracts from the most competent witnesses, including some of those just cited.

Whitfield, I think, uses this strong and doubtless overcharged expression:

"Beneath the moralising iniquity of the priests the land mourns."

135. But it may be well, besides these various testimonies, to give a few instances of the tone of doctrine which characterised the last century.

First, then, Bishop Hoadly, the ill-starred parent or chief disseminator of so many mischievous notions affecting the authority of the Church, in his Sermons on the "Terms of Acceptance"* gave to the world a scheme of doctrine relating to that vital subject, which was not less widely at variance with the spirit and language of Scripture. In the whole of this volume, there is not, I think, a single passage which recognises the preventing grace of God, and there are a hundred which either by pretermission or by actual implication seem to deny it.

Sterne, again, appears to have been one of the popular preachers as well as writers of the day. From a de-

* London, 1711.

scription given of him in the letters of Gray,* it appears both that he was very acceptable, and that, with a manner verging towards buffoonery, he was really superior to his age in religious feeling. Yet if we turn to his Sermons, which are thus commended as touching and impressive, we shall find that he treats the great doctrines of grace in that tone of practical semi-pelagianism which so deeply tainted the current opinion of the time. His works in general exhibit with a vein of pathos and true touches of human nature, a large infusion of indelicate humour, and an almost total absence of all distinctively Christian principles. Such productions would now be received from the pen of a clergyman with the strongest sentiments of disapprobation, while at the time when they were written they appear to have met with the greatest favour.†

136. In the year 1777 a writer of no less consideration, and in many respects, it may be added, excellence, than Archdeacon Paley, thus expresses himself in a Visitation Sermon. After enumerating many of the phrases and passages of Scripture, which relate to the new birth and new life of Christians, he observes, that it has frequently been asked, what such ex-

* Works, vol. iv. To Dr Wharton, June 22, 1760, and to Mason, in 1761.

† There is a Sermon of Sterne's, in his first volume, on the text "It is better to enter into the house of mourning, than into the house of feasting," which commences very strangely with the words "that I deny." The materials of the discourse are on the whole better than might be anticipated from such an exordium; but even this speaks ill of the prevailing sense of decorum, and of the taste of an age which in matters of religion had little else than decorum to boast of.

pressions mean? And he proceeds in these fatal words:

"To which we answer, nothing: nothing, that is, to us: nothing, to be found or sought for in the present circumstances of Christianity."*

And the illustrative effect of this passage is even heightened by the circumstance that Paley was himself, in practical earnestness, greatly in advance of the prevailing fashion of his age.

I cannot help also citing the following passage from the celebrated Dr. Jortin:

"It was the will of God that there should always be a succession of teachers to instruct the ignorant in all things necessary for them to believe and practise; and to explain to the more knowing the sublimer truths, which are perhaps sometimes rather the ornamental than the fundamental and essential parts of religion."†

In sum: the well-known volume of Mr. Wilberforce is now pretty generally recognised as drawing a faithful though melancholy picture of that state of religious depression and apparent exhaustion, which the work was itself an honoured instrument in contributing to remove.

137. I have no fear lest these acknowledgments on the part of one less likely to be arraigned of indifference than of bigoted attachment to the Church, should be quoted to the advantage of her enemies. It is no

* Sermon preached at the Visitation of the Bishop of Carlisle, July 17, 1777.

† Sermons, vol. i. p. 35.

part of the system either of the Church or of the State in this country that defects and corruptions should be hidden from view, or that, even where their existence is ascertained and on all hands admitted, still the mention of them should be avoided. On the contrary, publicity and free discussion are essential elements of our social life, with which it has long been fed. It is the practice here to avow freely and plainly what is amiss, and the freedom of that avowal frequently proceeds, not from a desire to effect hostile purposes through exaggeration, but from a hearty confidence in the substantial merit of our institutions and in their capacity of permanence. And as all this is true socially, both of the Church and of the State, so it is not less true that confession, penitence, amendment are upon religious grounds incumbent alike upon men and upon institutions administered by men; nor is there any surer test of the innate healthy vigour of the one or the other, than the fact that they prove themselves by experience able to bear the discipline of this searching criticism both from friend and foe, and that they grow and thrive in proportion as scrutiny is animated and animadversion free.

138. Together with the decline of doctrine and of Church principles, it is not less notorious that there was a great decay of mental power and of theological learning in the Church. Butler indeed and some others are bright lights upon the waste. Clarke, however, whom in a metaphysical sense we may view as among the ornaments of his period, inclined towards Arianism.

All those who have attended to the subject will, I believe, inform us, that the difference between the achievements in the Anglican Church, of the seventeenth and of the eighteenth centuries respectively, is not less conspicuous than it is lamentable. The more particularly, if as justice and the scope of this argument require, we put out of view the works of Leslie, Law, Brett, Nelson, Dodwell, and other non-jurors, the merits of which clearly tend to support the propositions here asserted. Bishop Warburton writes to Dr. Erskine on the 1st of May, 1753,—*"Learning is, in the southern parts at least, of this island, fast on the decline. Ignorance and barbarism are making large strides." And again he speaks of those who had opposed the Catholic principles in the matter of Bishop Hoadly (to which principles, however, he was not himself a friend), as the "Bangorian or paganised divines."† Again he says: "But learning is, in England, in a most deplorable condition. The books which daily come out are either miserable commonplace collections on the one hand, which are called learning, or are the extravagant whimsies and paradoxes on the other, which are called science."

Bishop Burnet‡ says:

"The much greater part of those who come to be ordained are ignorant to a degree not to be apprehended by those who are not obliged to know it. The easiest

* Sir Henry Moncrieff's Life of Erskine, p. 55, 175.

† Life of Erskine, p. 47.

‡ Preface to the Third Edition of the Pastoral Care, 1713.

part of knowledge is that to which they are the greatest strangers: I mean the plainest part of the Scriptures, which, they say, in excuse for their ignorance, that their tutors in the universities never mention the reading of to them. . . . Many, having got into orders, come for institution, and cannot make it appear that they have read the Scriptures, or any one good book, since they were ordained."

"There are too many unanswered books," says Archbishop Secker in 1762, "abroad in the world, and more appearing daily, written against Christianity and morals, and the doctrines of our Church. Nor have we of the clergy, for some time past, borne so large a share, comparatively with persons of other communions, in vindicating what we teach, as might be expected from us."*

139. There is a simple and striking proof of the extent to which a general secularity had encroached upon the Church, in the ordinary tone of those monumental inscriptions which deface the walls of many of our sacred edifices. It is extremely painful to see on every hand, in almost every church, records of social respectability, of domestic affection, of professional talent, of scientific acquirement, of martial valour, in one instance which has met my eye, even of distinction in freemasonry, without any accompanying notice of the Christian hopes of the deceased, and of that character by virtue of which alone their human qualities

* Seventh Charge. Works, vol. v. p. 466.

can justly claim either permanence or praise. What respect has the stern sceptre of Death for these earthly shows? What title have they to be commemorated amidst the solemnities of the Christian temple, unless they be under the seal of Christ? Gladdening it is in the long galleries of the Vatican, walled with the sepulchral inscriptions of antiquity, to pass from those cheerless memorials of the dead, which alone paganism could supply, to the emphatic phrases and the not less eloquent symbols, which marked the tombstones of the early Christians, and told of their present peace and joyful anticipations of the future; but how sad that we should now recoil from the use of our free privileges, and speak, as is so often the case, of the dead in Christ, as though immortality was not yet brought to light!

140. Although it may possibly seem unworthy of the subject, yet as general assertions such as the foregoing can only be tested by observation in detail, I will offer another indication of that spirit of petty egoism which is sure to prevail whenever the pressure of high Christian motives is removed. It has been observed as a circumstance full of meaning, that no man knows the names of the architects of our cathedrals. They left no record of their names upon the fabrics, as if they would have nothing there that could suggest any other idea than the glory of that God to whom the edifices were devoted for perpetual and solemn worship; nothing to mingle a meaner association with the profound sense of His presence; or as if, in the joy of having built Him an house, there was no want left un-

fulfilled, no room for the question whether it is good for a man to live in posthumous renown. But come to the mean and petty reconstructions of the interiors of our parochial churches, which have been effected within the last hundred years, and we find that they are bedaubed, even if the achievement be no more than the building a gallery, with the names at length, and often in a position of most indecent prominence, of those, not whose imaginations devised the work, not whose hands fashioned it, not whose offerings bore the cost, but such as have held some temporary parochial office, as have been, for the year of the unsightly work, some *Fidenarum Gabiorumque potestas*, and thus have been enabled to gratify their vanity in the temple of God. But it was the fault of an evil time.

141. Together with all these varied symptoms of evil came the destructive calamity of schism in its most unhappy form. For undoubtedly that is the least unhappy form of schism in which those who hazard their position of spiritual advantage in the Church, have evidently acted in such a spirit as to entail upon themselves that calamity by their own agency, and have not undergone it through the passion or obstinate insensibility of others; of those, namely, who whether in Church or State have practically determined the course which the Church should take. By consequence that is the most unhappy form of schism to those who are in the Church, which seems to leave a part, perhaps the largest part, possibly in some cases even the whole of its guilt upon such as cast out from

her bosom men whose worst fault is indiscretion, and who are unquestionably in intention faithful to her as well as eminently zealous in the service of her God; for they thereby bring into question those powers of the Church themselves, whose action is thus exhibited to the popular eye in a form so little corresponding with her character or beneficial to her children. It is true that indiscretion, in men like Wesley and Whitfield, may become irritated by calumny and opposition, and that they may fail, under circumstances so cruel, in maintaining the integrity of their ecclesiastical obligations; but whatever be the evil, nay the guilt, of such failure, it will by no means lie exclusively at the door of those in whose actions its practical result may first have come to light.

It is true indeed, that no formal or authentic act of the Church of England expelled the Wesleys and Whitfield from her communion; whatever was done, was done, as we may console ourselves with reflecting, by individuals; but it is in this very sense that I refer to the early history of methodism, as symptomatic of the unhealthy and degenerated tone of so many of the living representatives of the English Church at the period.*

142. If we look to the general aspect of manners and

* The advice of Archbishop Secker to his clergy in several of his charges, with respect to Methodism, is excellent. It is sadly contrasted with the abusive and insolent tone of the work entitled "The enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists compared." In Lord Mahon's chapter on Methodism (Hist. of England, vol. ii.) the question is discussed with candour: and in Doddridge's Correspondence, iii. 381.

morals in the last century, it shows that, until the personal character of George III. began to diffuse a happier influence, the forms of society had acquired the pomp and rigour of decorum without its purity. Dr. Bisset (easy enough in his sentiments to characterise Wesley and Whitfield, as men who were "ingenious adventurers in fanaticism, who framed a new species of superstition,") writes thus of the age and court of George the Second: "There was in conversation and in familiar writing an indelicacy, less, indeed, than in the preceding age of George I., but still far short of just taste and moral refinement. This was probably encouraged by the practice of the court, to which modesty and reputation were not then necessary passports. The king's mistresses still continued to mix in all the fashionable parties, and even to be companions to the princesses."*

143. And now we are approaching to a happier era, whose first prognostics, however, are of a very mixed and qualified description.

The first step towards the reinvigoration of the ministry of the Church was just what we might have conjectured. Serious and earnest men in regarding the deplorable state of things, were naturally before and beyond all other matters appalled with the destruction of the individual souls of their fellow creatures which it implied. Thus from the character of the evil we are prepared to anticipate that of the remedy; to find these

* History of the Reign of George III. ch. i. (vol. i. p. 263.)

zealous persons, in the first instance, not looking to remoter provisions of religion, whose necessity might not until long thereafter become palpable; but bending the whole energy of their minds towards the shortest and most immediately effectual mode of counteracting the prevalent evil, by inculcating, and that in the manner most calculated to arouse men from their slumbers, those doctrines which most directly bear on personal salvation. Accordingly, the fall of man, the atonement, justification by faith, sanctification by the Holy Spirit, were the truths to which these earnest men resorted. And neither did they then, nor have their successors, yet learned in all cases fully to appreciate those doctrines respecting the Godhead which are enunciated in the Nicene Creed, at their full importance, although they have never let them slip. They have then, and ever since, been too much inclined to classify the Christian doctrines in a minutely graduated scale, and to fix the importance of each according to the precise degree in which its bearing on the personal acceptance of men is direct and obvious. It followed naturally that they were very little disposed to pay regard to the powers and privileges of the visible Church, which Church they excusably, though not rightly judged by a narrow induction from the features of a particular place and period, and the exercise of which powers, and the assertion of which lofty claims, they saw so frequently associated with personal luke-warmness in religion, and with gross administrative abuse. There lay before them a work which might with some justice be termed

one of general re-conversion, and they therefore naturally fell back upon the most elementary truths of the Gospel, "repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ." Amidst a deadness so general, they would scarcely feel the need, for the time and under the stress of their labours, of any other bond of unity, than such as those labours with their perils and rewards of themselves supplied during the heat of action.

144. And further, and likewise in conformity with what a reasonable anticipation would have suggested, the reaction of these persons from the fault of their generation, being a movement under the guidance only of individual judgment, would more or less become morbid, and would partake of exaggeration and excess. With the vital doctrines which they preached, they made strange and unauthorised admixtures. Such were the notions of perfection and assurance taught by John Wesley; such were the tenets of reprobation which distinguish the writings of men belonging to the school of Toplady and Berridge. The cry of antinomianism was raised, and raised not wholly without reason; it had received from sundry persons in the Church a virtual though not an intended countenance. The cry of division, of innovation, of schism within the Church, was loudly employed against these preachers and their adherents. They persevered, they acted and wrote not always with temper or with judgment; they passed to their rest, and they have had some generations of successors.

145. Every year that has elapsed since the commencement of the present century, has seen modifications in the tone of teaching adopted by persons who have still not scrupled to profess themselves to be a school, and to be scholars in the main of those masters. But the teaching itself has gradually shed its novelty and extravagance; wherever those features have been retained in their full force they have assumed a determinate form, and have led to secession from the Church; where they have not produced that result they have been themselves subdued and reduced by the insensible influence of the spirit of the Church; and that form of teaching has joined itself harmoniously in instances innumerable to the strongest belief, and most determinate assertion of Church principles; it retains its zeal, its vigour, its popularity, its effect, nay it increases each and all of them, when it comes to occupy a more solid and comprehensive basis, upon those foundations which the great institutions of the Catholic Church have laid. Still there may be found, here and there, some individual who is an exception to the rule, and who continues to preach the doctrines of salvation not in a Catholic but in an idiosyncratic form; who has not yet learned the insufficiency of such a scheme, without some further guarantees and provisions, to meet the necessities of the time; who has not yet felt how those words of the prophet apply to the crude and weak theology in question, "for the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself in it; and the covering narrower than that he can cover himself with it." But

these are few, and are becoming fewer from day to day; as it respects the general body of the clergy, it is, as I think, clear, that the preachers associated with the movement of the last century have infused all that was most truly vital and material in their favourite tenets into the common and pervading tenor of pastoral instruction throughout the country. Upon the other hand it is at least equally clear, that they have received, as well as communicated, powerfully modifying influences; the teachers of fifty years back who sympathised with methodism, would hardly be recognised in those of the present day, towards whose formation nevertheless they have contributed one, and that the most essential element; their legitimate modern representatives remain in activity and honour, not so much unclothed in substance of their ancient tenets, as clothed upon with others which convert their chance armour into a panoply, supplied with the positive instead of the negative, with realities instead of figures; with the required supplement to their system of instruments, and the effectual guarantee of their ends.

146. This supplement to the tumultuary action of the last century, which concentrates its energies and corrects its eccentricities, is no other than the body of those church principles, substantially corresponding with the slight sketch indicated in the beginning of this chapter, which have now so deeply and intimately pervaded the general mind of the Church of England. Does it seem a startling assertion that the doctrines of Catholic consent, of grace in the Sacraments, of suc-

cession in the ministry, of visibility in the Church, are the natural and effective complement, and the best guarantee of those doctrines of personal religion, for the lively and general exhibition of which we owe so much to the Romaines, the Newtons, the Scotts, the Cecils, and those who preceded and followed them? Let us examine whether the assertion be not supported by the facts.

147. For a century past the theology of our country had been haunted by the evil dreams of three false oppositions, in matters of the highest importance. The first between faith and obedience; the second between grace and the sacraments; the third between the Scriptures and the Church.

I say oppositions; because it has happened that in each of these three cases a strong inculcation of one of the terms thus falsely opposed, has been suspected to indicate either indifference or aversion to the other term, and to the claims of what it denoted. I say false oppositions, because while it is true that there has existed a conventional and subjective opposition, an opposition constructed in the minds of men, yet the things themselves, substantively and objectively considered, have remained as ever, by Divine ordinance, in perfect and perpetual harmony.

148. Of the first it may be said that we have now practically got rid; and the second and third we may, from the signs of the times, expect to follow. I cannot but think that those who are still perplexed by such notions will begin to suspect themselves on these heads

when they candidly reflect that the first depreciators of baptism and deniers of its grace, were Pelagius and his adherents, who denied preventing grace altogether; and that the great doctor of grace, the illustrious and holy Augustine, established the doctrine of original sin, expressly by arguments deduced from the grace of baptism. The controversy was fought upon the case of infants. "Here," said he, "is the evil, and here the remedy." Pelagius denied both, and they must stand or fall together. Those who allow the fault of nature can appreciate the grace of baptism. Those who deny the grace of baptism are in logical consistency bound, unless they will maintain that children are irreversibly lost if they die, to deny the fault of nature. And as to opposition between the Church of God and the written standard of His religion, let us rather see with the Psalmist, that the time "When the Lord shall build up Sion," which is His house, will also be the time "when His glory," which is His truth, "shall appear."*

149. But the sense of the first of these oppositions, —namely, that supposed to lie between faith and works,—painful as it was, and false as was its imagined ground, was in itself a symptom of the irritability attendant upon returning vigour, and therefore afforded cause for rejoicing. And so, if at this moment there is pain, and a sense of some discrepancy in the Church, with respect to such matters as the doctrine of grace in the sacraments, and that of succession in the

* Ps. cii. 16.

ministry, it is only the pain which belongs to the processes required for the recovery of health, the pain so wisely ordained to attend them, in order that we may learn not to trifle with our blessings, nor to let them slip in anticipation of their easy resumption at our will.

150. The last twenty years, and in particular the last ten, have witnessed a resolute and determined inculcation of Church principles, by men whose sympathies, with respect to the earlier doctrinal struggle of the preceding generation, were far more with the promoters than with the opponents of that movement. Now this resuscitation has precisely, and in due order, retraced the path of decline. As the doctrine of the study and the pulpit generally sank when Church principles had been relaxed, so (surely it is a striking circumstance, full of the materials of deep reflection,) the reinvigoration of doctrine has been followed by the resumption of Church principles, and for the most part in kindred quarters. And so it was in the course of nature that the order of progress should be. As long as zeal was rare, and its subjects isolated, the merely personal principles of religion might tolerably suffice; but when masses have begun to kindle, and the Church at large again to brace herself for her work, then zeal, in order to the maintenance of unity, and in order to permanency of results, absolutely requires to be embodied in that organisation, which Church principles alone can supply.

151. If it be said, there is this opinion about prayers

for the dead, and that opinion about sin after baptism, connected with the inculcation of the principles of Church authority; and one writer has depreciated the characters of the Reformers, and another has made unwritten tradition a part of the rule of faith, the answer is easy; these are accessory and collateral matters, to be tried on their own merits, and in cool blood; not to be rejected in the mass and without examination, far less to be allowed to drag down with them other principles, such as that of the Apostolical Succession and of Catholic consent, which are positively maintained and acted upon by our Church, that is to say, asserted in her unrepealed formularies, and realised in the daily and unvarying practice of her rulers. And let us suppose that these opinions of particular individuals are examined, and that they fail to abide the test; that they are consequently exploded, one, or most, or all. What then? They would but be exhibited to our view as the dross, without which in this poor world the pure ore is not to be obtained. They would but complete the analogy between the present efforts for the fuller recognition of Church principles, and the counterpart which we have found for them in efforts of the last century, to bring out into the clearer consciousness of Christian men the necessity of a new and spiritual life. Every powerful reaction, unless under a guidance absolutely inspired, must necessarily bring its excesses, its idiosyncracies, its accretions; that first reaction abounded in them, yet brought us a vast preponderance of spiritual good; must we not expect now

again to find, that human infirmity is not altogether expelled from the thoughts, the tempers, and the language of men? And may we not still once more find abundant reason to bless God for having raised up his instruments to perform a work in his Church no less glorious than needful? For although it be true, as I believe it is beyond all reasonable doubt, that the doctrines of authority and of succession in the Church, have ever been largely held, either in an explicit or an implied form, and in the worst times rarely disbelieved among the clergy;* yet it is undeniable that the efforts of a few individuals have been, in this day, mainly conducive to their being brought out into distinct consciousness, and into a practical energy and life, in some degree corresponding with their intrinsic importance; and to their being felt and appreciated throughout the general body of the Church.

152. Now the promoters of the earlier movement, when accused of novelty in doctrine, fell back upon the principles of the English Reformation as attested both by our standing formularies and by the works of our greatest and best divines, and with a great deal of substantial justice and success; and even so have the teachers of Church principles appealed against the judgments of temerity and of partial knowledge, to the very same sources, and with at least equal effect. But they are not limited to those sources. They travel from century to century up to the age of martyrs and of fathers, to the age of the apostles, and to the text of

* See "Presbyterian Rights Asserted." Note, pp. 7, 8.

the sacred Scriptures; and there, and there alone, do they claim finally to take their stand.

153. Accordingly, Church principles prosper and advance: they command almost everywhere at least an inchoate and progressive assent; and they have visibly and deeply leavened—and that not inertly, as was once the case, but as living truths—the whole body of the clergy; and such an assent is of the description most congenial to these principles. They do not encourage blind partisanship, nor premature grasping at conclusions. It may almost be said, they cannot be rapidly acquired; but they grow slowly out of the deeper soil, like the oak which is to abide the sun and the tempest, and to shelter generation after generation. They grow, however, unceasingly. They seem to grow even in those who most resist them; for such authors as now write in professed opposition to one or other of them, still assume and treat as undeniable much of what belongs to them, and of what only half a century ago the popular scheme of opinions would utterly have repudiated. They gradually absorb and exhaust the spirit of party, extract its poison, and, raising its zeal and its other virtuous elements from a position and a contact unworthy of them, place them upon a higher and a broader platform. They emerge from the contentions which molest and perish with the present, like the mountain top from the clouds of its middle region. This is no empty declamation. The events of the last few years have proved that the clergy of this Church and nation find infinitely more substance in their prin-

ciples of union than in their points of difference; and that we may rationally expect to see them, by the blessing of God, become, as years advance and experience accumulates, more and more compact and inseparable in their union.

154. Once more: as learning decayed with the decay of Church principles, so with their revival it promises to revive. The commercial character indeed of our country, and the temper of the age, are so unfavourable to speculative habits and to steadiness of research, that great caution and modesty should govern any anticipations on this subject in which we may venture to indulge. But there are means of knowing whether the standard of acquirements, and the amount actually realised, be actually advancing or receding in public schools, in the universities, or in the episcopal examinations for holy orders; and it is notorious that in each and all of these, for many years past, there has been a continuous and a considerable progress; for some of the most recent of those years, under no very encouraging circumstances as respects theology, since a measure has been depending in Parliament, and is now just carried into a law, for the purpose of reducing those ancient foundations of our cathedrals which in former times have afforded so much of facility and encouragement to study.

155. Let it not then too hastily be said, this is the creation of discord in the Church. Earnestly indeed would I wish that every line of these pages were unwritten, rather than that they should be a rock of

offence to so much as one of my brethren, having neither the right nor the desire to ascribe to my own speculations that high prerogative which belongs to certain truth alone—of casting upon her adversaries the entire responsibility of their own exasperation and hostility; but rather do I hope and believe that their effect, humble and limited as it must needs be, may yet be towards the confirmation of peace. All difference is not discord. All preaching, for example, presupposes and exhibits to the world differences in the Church—differences between the practice of her members and their belief, or between their actual belief and that to which they are pledged. But such preaching, while it discloses difference, tends to remove it, and to substitute for it a perfect, inward, enduring harmony. The description of labour upon which I have been engaged, I would habitually regard as one not of reprehension this way or that, but of mutual assistance.*

156. We are men standing together upon the same platform of privilege and of responsibility; we are united in the closest and most endearing bonds by the belief of the articles of the Christian faith, and by participation in the living Sacraments of the Redeemer; we find our unity in His mystical body a bond of connection stronger a thousand fold than can be severed by any of the still remaining differences of opinion, which are proved compatible with continuance in that

* See the Primary Charge of the Bishop of Salisbury, p. 31, *et seq.*, where the topic of unity in the Church is admirably handled.

unity; we are to study and inquire together for the fuller reflective and conscious development of the principles which we hold. Here it is that Christianity is truly progressive, in the individual mind: we speak of that immutable and immovable religion as advancing, but it is by a figure; just as a traveller in very rapid motion thinks that the objects around him move, we, in the right course of our discipline, advance towards that immutable body of truth by the fuller apprehension of it in its parts and as a whole. In this kind of approximation from the partial to the universal we are of necessity variously proficient. Some professionally and with authority conduct the work; others in a humbler sphere, and wholly without authority, employ such means and opportunities as God has given them in reasoning out and disencumbering the truth. But the general question to which we are all seeking some answer is this: What is that which is truly implied in our common principles? And this we ask with much less, than has sometimes existed, of predisposition to shape the reply according to foregone conclusions, with much more of faith in results not yet palpably realised. We agree in holding the articles of faith which were defined in the early, in the earliest Church, as the matter of a right belief, and as the theological, the intellectual basis of a Christian union. We agree in allowing that, by the true import of those articles, whether it be or be not as yet discerned by us individually, we must without scruple abide, whenever it may, in any given case, come to be clearly

and reasonably established. In inquiring therefore what may be the fullest (I say not the full) meaning of those truths which we profess, we are all fellow-workmen; we have not any separate, we have the strongest common interest, and that upon no vague and visionary theory of liberality, but upon a long-known and long-tried basis of truth, secured, as it were, at both ends from final divergency—that is to say, by acknowledging the same creed in the outset, and by contemplating the same object in the close of our process of inquiry, namely, the gradual enlargement of our comprehension of that creed.

157. If indeed the creed in question were an arbitrary scheme; if the selection of many Christian truths, and the discrimination of things essential from things indifferent to salvation, had depended upon any merely human choice, unsustained, unsecured by the divine promises, we could not regard it as a real, but only as a temporary and conventional bond of union, because it would be liable to change with the fluctuations of opinion. But with the excellent reasons which we have for referring that creed, with all the certainty that moral questions require or commonly admit, to apostolic authority, we may and must feel that the union in which it binds us is real and not nominal; that it falls within the scope of the apostolic rule, "Nevertheless, whereunto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule; let us speak the same thing;"* and again, "if in anything ye be otherwise

* Phil. iii. 15, 16.

minded, God shall reveal even this unto you:" that we are justified in assuming it as an origin, as a fixed immovable basis, in all our processes of thought: and that it obliges us to regard one another as partners in that which we possess, and as fellow-labourers in respect of that for which we seek. And although the form of the creed has expanded into greater fulness since the apostolic times, yet the moral evidence attaching to it, though without the claim of direct inspiration, is evidence so full, so cogent, and so solemn, that the understanding readily acknowledges that it comes to Christians invested in the rarest manner and degree, with the palpable attributes of truth.

158. It is only in such a sense as that here indicated, that, as men, we can have real union in theological tenets, for the simple reason that our knowledge of them is partial. For instance, what is more a bond of union among Christians than belief in the Holy Trinity? And yet how small is our knowledge of the essence of that doctrine! Many properties indeed we are authorised to predicate concerning it, and there is much that we are likewise enjoined to deny; but of its full meaning, how small a portion, so far as we are qualified to discern the limits of our knowledge, has been placed within the scope of our knowledge! Believing, however, in that which is revealed, we likewise know that however much may remain unrevealed, yet if the day come when there shall be a further illumination in a better world, those who may attain thither will be led and bound to accept all that additional

knowledge of which they are as yet unconscious; and even here, as knowing the immutability of truth, and as taking the future cheerfully upon trust from the benignant providence of God, they feel themselves united by anticipation in that which they know not, because it is truly and inseparably attached to that which they know. We stand then, as it seems, in the way of God's ordinances as regards this matter; obeying what we clearly see; waiting and labouring that He may realise, in His wisdom, all that yet lacks to our full and intelligent harmony in point of truth, as well as to our perfect holiness in point of practice; and finding alike in our present position and our past history, admonitions not only to love one another, but to love as brethren.

159. There still remains a practical illustration of the perplexing results which may follow from the want of one of the Catholic ecclesiastical principles, namely, the episcopal succession, so fresh, so vivid, and so proximate, that although it is drawn from a controversy beset on every side in a peculiar degree with suspicions and misapprehensions, I will run the hazard of alluding to it. It is the controversy now so widely spread and so keenly carried on in Scotland upon the subject of the Veto Question.* The facts and the principles ne-

* Over and above the judicial arguments in the reports of the Auchterarder and Lethendy cases, the subject has been discussed in a great variety of pamphlets, some of them very long and very able, others of them very long without being particularly able, and one of them particularly able without being long. I mean the eloquent and masculine production of Hugh Millar, entitled "A Letter to Lord Brougham." The chief combatants in this kind of warfare are, against the veto, the

cessary to a full exhibition of the merits of this very peculiar and interesting case are almost equally complex; nor do I imagine that any person can be thoroughly qualified to determine upon them with any great degree of confidence, unless, in addition to much besides, he be deeply and comprehensively read in the entire history of the Scottish Reformation. I shall only attempt to give such incidental notices as will, I think, bear with advantage upon my general argument.

160. I begin with stating that I cannot but see considerable force in the reasonings, and much that is entitled to sympathy and respect in the motives, of those who have embarked upon either side of this controversy.

In the year 1834 the General Assembly of the kirk of Scotland passed an act, the provisions of which were to the following effect:—that after any presbytery should have received and acknowledged, or, as the phrase is, should have moderated in, a call from any parish of which the benefice was vacant in favour of a presentee, it should be competent to the male heads of families in the parish, being communicants, to enter and offer a simple dissent from the call; that if the par-

Dean of Faculty, Dr. Cook, Dr. Muir, Dr. Bryce, Mr. Robertson, Mr. Macfarlane; on the popular side, Dr. Chalmers, Mr. Dunlop, Mr. Gray, Mr. Candlish, Mr. Cunningham, and others. An elaborate review of the question, which throws many strong lights upon it, will be found in the British Critic for July, 1840. I ought also to mention to the reader the argument of Lord Jeffrey in the Auchterarder case in favour of the Presbytery, and the speech of Lord Dalhousie, in the month of June, 1840, in the House of Lords, for Lord Aberdeen's bill.

ties so dissenting should amount to a majority of such communicants, the presbytery should be bound thereupon to reject such presentee, unless the dissenting parties should refuse upon being challenged to make a declaration bearing that their dissent proceeded from conscientious and not from factious motives. And now, after the lapse of six years of litigation and discussion, the promoters of this law and its opponents, agreeing in the necessity of some parliamentary enactment on the subject, in order to resolve the dilemmas which have occurred under the law, are nevertheless thus far at issue. The opponents of the Veto as represented by Lord Aberdeen, (and they cannot be more competently or more favourably represented than in his person,) agree to recognise the powers of presbyteries in deciding upon the settlement of ministers to this very wide extent; that those bodies shall be legally entitled, subject to no question save that of the superior church courts, to reject any presentee upon the ground of any cause or quality whatever, be it trivial or considerable, be it true or false, provided only it be something inherent in, or belonging to, or alleged to inhere in or belong to, the presentee himself; provided however also, that in each case the reason of rejection be recorded. On the other hand, the friends of the Veto Act are more or less willing to forego so much of it as makes it compulsory on a presbytery to disallow a presentee in respect of the simple dissent of the communicants, or at least to "acquiesce" in a law to that effect; but they absolutely require

that the civil law shall leave it optional to the presbytery to reject upon that ground if it shall so think fit.*

161. Thus the bill introduced into the House of Lords during the present year proposed to give to presbyteries a discretion much larger than that which an English bishop can exercise in the matter of institution or collation, and perhaps practically as large as that which any bishop would wish to exercise in the matter of simple ordination. And the opposite party demand for presbyteries, not any further enlargement of their own powers, which can with propriety of language be so termed, but a licence to recognise in supersession or in bar, as well of their own function as of the inchoate civil rights of the presentee, an absolute and unreasoned will of the people.

162. I do not mix with the question immediately at issue that other and very important question, ought the authorities of the Church in all cases to follow the dictates of the civil tribunals? because I think it is one upon which men of tolerable candour can hardly differ, when once they have separated the general principle from the perplexing associations that may arise out of the particular case. There can surely be no doubt that a Church, if it be an establishment, must follow the civil law, in all cases, as a last resort; or that as a Church it must, in the last resort, decline obedience to the civil law wherever the civil law con-

* I derive this brief statement of the present position of the veto question from the recently published correspondence between Lord Aberdeen and the General Assembly's non-intrusion committee, and from Mr. Dunlop's letter to Lord Aberdeen on that correspondence.

travenes the higher law of conscience. This is not claiming any right of rebellion for the Church; for it is the very same right which, as an individual, each of us would claim for himself and allow to his neighbour. We may think the conscience of a man misinformed, and may blame him for its misinformation; but we cannot say he ought to act against his conscience. But when he declines obedience to the law, he must take the consequences which the law enjoins —so must the Church; in other words, Church and Establishment must separate. The very contemplation and discussion of such contingencies generally, is a misfortune; but the contingency has come so near, that in order to be prepared for all emergencies, sober-minded men must look it calmly in the face. The question, how far it is right to provoke such a contingency, must depend upon the previous inquiry, how cogent are the reasons on which the General Assembly has been acting? I can only conceive one ground on which a claim for universal and absolute obedience from the Church courts could be founded: it would be this—that Church power had no other foundation than that of civil law, and that as it would be ridiculous for a civil tribunal existing only under the civil law, which had acted without or against law, to pretend a claim to continue its existence in any distinct capacity after contravening the law, so the Church, when it ceases to move with and by the law, ceases to move and to exist at all. I should hope that no Englishman has so shallow and false a conception of

the Church; and if it prevails with any considerable party in Scotland, it can hardly be except in consequence of those changes, by which the succession was broken in the Establishment, and its historical connection with the primitive Church, of which no man can assert that it had no authority, or that it derived its authority from civil law, thereby interrupted and destroyed. The Assembly, however, has proceeded all along upon the supposition that it is entitled to exercise the powers divinely given to the Church; and if, thus assured of its own ecclesiastical competency, it be also right in thinking that the principles of Christianity require the maintenance of the Veto or of some equivalent or similar law, then it is also right in preferring the maintenance of such a law to the continuance of the connection now subsisting between the presbyterian establishment and the state. And if there be any real obligation to forego the exercise of Church power in deference to the requisitions of secular power, it must be, not because Church power has no real existence, nor because civil law is the universal arbiter of moral action; but because, in any particular case, it may be demonstrable, that the exercise of such power is not required by the law of Christ.

163. The friends of the bill of Lord Aberdeen have shown a disposition, as I think must in fairness be admitted, to place the civil rights of patrons under a very severe restriction, in order, if possible, to satisfy their opponents. They look back to the lessons of Scottish history, and they are naturally afraid of un-

settling the system which has prevailed in the main for more than a century, and which has escaped the difficulties of former periods, when Presbyterianism did not sufficiently harmonise with monarchy, nor government by bishops with the choice of the people. They see in it a middle term, which, after many failures, has, as they conceive, succeeded, and they are unwilling to abandon it for untried and ominous alternatives, bearing a near resemblance to the causes of some old and formidable dilemmas. They see, too, in the veto law such a development of the democratic principle, as they think alike incompatible with the peace of the Church and with the stability of our civil institutions.

164. But is there, on the other hand, nothing to be said in excuse of those who are urging onwards this perilous movement? In the first place, surely the charge of ambition and the love of power is not fairly to be ascribed as their general and prevailing motive. The obvious facts of the case are against such an imputation. That for which they ask is in truth leave to impose a limitation on the Presbyterial powers which the bill of 1840 proposed to confer; it is leave to recognise in the communicants a portion of that discretion (with something more) which the bill assigned to the Church tribunals. Upon this specific ground some of the most respected opponents of the veto have founded their objections. But in truth this is too broad and deep a matter to rest upon any personal considerations alone. We must look somewhere for a wider founda-

tion: it is an old controversy in a new form. The principle for which the vetoists contend I believe is, when unclothed of all that is secondary and accidental to the question, really this—that somewhere in the Church there must be a Church authority, an absolute will, which shall act within its own sphere, and shall not render an account of its actions to any out of that sphere. Such an authority there must manifestly be found in every society so far as it is independent. Such is the legislature in the state, such is the father in the family. Neither of these will be bound to give reasons with their acts, because such an obligation would in the end destroy their supremacy. And the father is not to be called to account by the state for the actions that he does as a father, but only for those which he does as a citizen. So the Church must have its central power, acting upon its best reason undoubtedly, and having an immediate and exclusive responsibility to God. If there be one thing in the Church, which more than another is its own precious and strictly guarded inheritance, after the decision of doctrines, it is the calling of ministers. Upon this, as one of her essential incommunicable prerogatives, she claims to execute an absolute will, the function committed to her by Christ through his apostles. This absolute will is exercised by the bishops where the apostolical succession is maintained: where Presbyterianism prevails, I imagine the real and fundamental, though latent sentiment, the full and final form of the instincts which Presbyterianism embodied

and represented, will be found to be a belief, that the right of determining who shall and who shall not be ministers essentially and ultimately lies with the Christian people at large. Those who are now contending for the veto, or for such plenary provisions in favour of the Presbyteries as shall enable those bodies to acknowledge the legitimacy of the veto, (which, as Lord Aberdeen has said, would be the veto in another shape,) seem to be labouring, with less or more of consciousness, after a method of expressing the principle that in the last resort it rests absolutely and inappellably with the Church to say who shall and who shall not be ministers, a principle which is one of the poles whereon she rests and revolves, and of which I do not say that the movement for the veto affords either a full or even, in any sense, a legitimate enunciation, but which I do believe that it aims and seeks to enunciate.

165. That, however, which I have to observe as mainly relevant to my general argument is, that this most vital and ominous controversy never has arisen where the government of the Church by bishops is through the providence of God, preserved. The Scottish vetoists argue with great force, that if a patron may designate a licentiate for a living, without the reservation of any power of rejecting him, except for certain reasons to be defined and alleged, then the Church has no power of refusing to confer orders except on certain grounds which she must define and allege, inasmuch as his presentation involves and ne-

cessitates his ordination, and thus the nature of her power in ordination is essentially altered, and its freedom fatally curtailed. The hard necessity of their position drives those who feel the strength of this plea to demand as a remedy the enactment of a law, which subjects a candidate for the pastoral office to an irresponsible and unconditional rejection by the great mass of adult males whom he is to teach. Upon the one hand, we are told that if the veto be given, peace is banished, meritorious men are wantonly sacrificed, the settlement of ministers becomes an occasion for the activity of every foul and evil passion, republicanism is legally established in the Church. Upon the other hand it is shown us, that if no such absolute power of rejection be granted to the people, the Church becomes in effect accountable to the civil power for her conduct in the ordination of ministers, a matter committed wholly and absolutely to her own discretion. And I must say that, as upon general grounds I cannot deny the first set of allegations, so neither, if I take for axioms (as I am bound to do) the principles of Presbyterianism, am I prepared to meet the second. I find it difficult to resist the reasonings of either party: either that which is in effect demanding a control over ordination in the Church, or that which argues that the control thus demanded is incompatible with order, with civil rights, with the continuance of the legal establishment. How are they to be reconciled? which party is to yield? what permanent settlement can be suggested which will not

involve either an extended schism, or a rupture with the state?

166. But where the bishops of the Church have sway, the whole matter of ordination is inalienably within their discretion and control, and the sacerdotal character is effectually detached from any dependence upon an appointment to minister in a particular place, which it could not and cannot be where the consent of a congregation is supposed to be one necessary condition, at least as a general rule, of the ministerial office itself. On the other hand, when the ordeal of ordination has been passed, and the pastoral character duly given, the question of its exercise in this or that place no longer presents those mysterious and peculiar features which ecclesiastical authority must exclusively examine; and the civil courts are competent to protect the rights of patrons and presentees without any apprehensions for the legitimate independence of the Church, while in Scotland we are met with a dilemma, of which it is enough to say, that notwithstanding the best dispositions and the great abilities on all hands, no solution has hitherto been found. Nor will railing accusations, this way or that, supply one: perhaps even the piety, zeal, and temper of Scotland may still prove unequal to the task: unless the hearts of the nation should be moved to look below the surface, and to see whether men have not been blamed for the faults of a system, and whether there be not a remedy which would prove effectual, provided it be applied in a different quarter. The right of commissioning the

ministers of Christ is the real subject of contention: were that restored to its true owners, the parties who are now struggling for it would speedily be at peace; and the fears now not unjustly entertained on the one hand for religious freedom, on the other for civil order and the maintenance of an establishment, so far as they are connected with this subject, would be effectually allayed.

SECTION V.—GENERAL VIEW.

167—70. Three conditions of the general efficacy of Christianity 171—5. How realised in the Church. 176—83. Church of England, how situated relatively to other bodies, as a centre of union. 184—6, Growing sentiment for union, which must be Ecclesiastical. 187—93. Approach towards a crisis; preparation for it; the relations between the laws of truth and of love. 194, 195. Pursuit of Divine Truth. 196. Anticipations for the Church of England.

167. And now having, as I trust, disposed of the three positive charges which are brought against Church principles in the mass, let me conclude with a general view of their positive advantages as satisfying all the conditions most desirable, whether for truth or for peace. It should seem that, in order to the most effectual promotion of the purposes for which the Christian religion has been established upon earth, we ought chiefly to desire such provisions, in matters pertaining to religion, as afford the best security for the joint attainment of these three objects:— Firstly, the permanence of the Faith, or that body of revealed truth upon which there is reason firmly to

believe that salvation depends; secondly, unity of Christian communion, or the comprehension of the greatest possible numbers within such institutions as are marked by the possession of all the conditions requisite for the maintenance and propagation of the faith; thirdly, that extended liberty of thought, which demands that differences even upon matters of faith shall only be removed by the persuasive means adapted to the nature of conscientious belief; and, further, that differences not upon matter of faith, shall be left, morally as well as physically, free to the private conscience, and shall not be liable to be visited, through individual or sectarian bigotry, with that kind of censure and condemnation which is due only to opinions endangering the Catholic and fundamental doctrines of Christianity.

168. Such, I believe, would be the probable judgment of any one who should bring to the consideration of the theological controversies and religious phenomena of this age the happy combination of a free unbiassed judgment, and an adequate acquaintance with the laws, the history, and the ends of Christianity. For security against the restless spirit of scepticism, which finds shelter and advantage among the weaknesses and corruptions of our nature, it would be obviously urgent to draw clear lines about that body of propositions in which the sum of the whole matter is contained; in a word, to separate, by the clearest possible demarcation, matters of faith from matters of opinion. The effect of this would be to compel the

enemy to come to definite and formal issue upon its genuine merits, and to prevent his undermining the guards of our souls by partial attack and oblique depreciation, as when he argues that this or that doctrine is far-fetched, remote from practice, immaterial; by pretexts of charity, as when he would persuade us with subtler venom that some article of faith is contrary to love, and so cannot be faith; and by his speculating upon our love of ease, upon that fictitious good nature which has much of its root in indolent selfishness, upon our fear of opinion, upon our natural sympathy and desire of concord, and availing himself of such opportunities as these might afford him either to destroy piecemeal the structure of Christian truth, or to sap its foundations, with a view to its entire and sudden overthrow. And this division greatly facilitates the task of the simple-minded Christian, when he is called on to give a reason of his hope; for in showing him where he may, without breach of duty, avoid all strenuous conflict, it also shows him for what objects he must husband his vigilance and zeal.

169. Having then fixed, as the first object of anxiety, adequate securities for the integrity of that faith which alone affords the positive means of salvation to the world, and which never can be permanently effective except in its integrity, would not the liberal and impartial mind next desire that the faith thus preserved in completeness and efficacy should be carried onwards, and applied to its purposes on the largest scale—should be brought home to as many individuals as could possi-

bly be placed within the range of its salutary influences? It would indeed be worse than vain, it would be an act destructive of its own intention, to purchase any such numerical increase in the force of the adherents of religion by surrendering portions of its essence, inasmuch as both the adherence itself must thereby in the first instance be rendered proportionably steril and unavailing, and in its final issue no fixed centre, no immovable anchorage in revealed truth, will remain; yet, subject to the condition of studying above all things to maintain the faith in its integrity, we not only may, but must, in consistency with the Christian principle of love, desire to find the pervading organisation of that body in which the faith unchangeably resides to be such as, with the least possible amount of offence and hindrance to weaker consciences, will harmoniously include the greatest possible number of conscientious professors or seekers of the truth.

170. Discord, however, in the body is an evil, never indeed wholly to be separated from the conditions of our human state, yet in its mischievous consequences only second to actual departure from the body; and it is obvious that the endeavour (which has been just now determined to be laudable) to include within the pale of Church communion the greatest number of persons, and therefore the utmost latitude of opinions compatible with the secure integrity of the faith, would seem as though it might entail the mischievous results of internal dissension in proportion to the liberty of thought which it contemplated and allowed. Now this

danger requires to be met by the third of those provisions which have been indicated above. Differences of judgment do not always impair moral and religious harmony. It is when the conflicting propositions are each held as matters of Divine authority and of essential importance, that the passions of men are apt to become inflamed under the fair self-justifying pretext of a zeal for God. Now we should sacrifice the primary to the secondary, the greater to the less, if we were to arrive at the conclusion that, in order to avoid such discord, nothing should be held as of Divine authority and essential importance, or as what is termed by theologians, in a solemn and peculiar sense, matter of faith. But, on the other hand, it is most desirable for the sake of Christian brotherhood and peace, that nothing should be so held except what, according to such evidence as our human condition requires, really is so: because every one of the mere opinions which heat, rashness, or ignorance would add to the canon of faith, becomes a new cause of needless wrath, and needless wrath is not pain only, but also sin. Since, therefore, such fatal evils result from confounding the province of proper belief with that of opinion, from the encroachment of the second on the first shipwreck of the faith, and from the encroachment of the first on the second breach of charity, how can we exaggerate the moral value in this point of view, of a system which should afford us an adequate criterion to distinguish the one from the other?

171. The broad and firm basis for religious action

which these three provisions would afford, and the repose of heart and conscience which, amid the necessary pains and struggles of the earthly warfare, they would warrant, Church principles, and these alone, can realise. In the voice of the Church we find a witness attesting the faith with far more of stability and certainty than can belong to individual conviction alone, and adding greatly to the force of that conviction in the individual mind. But the voice of the Church, it will be said, is not always one, and clearly to be collected; and the voice of one part of the Church is often at variance with another. Granted: and this variance, with whatever attendant disadvantages, is at least subservient to some highly important and beneficial purposes. First, it renders the consent of the Church more conspicuous, and its authority more cogent, upon the great articles of faith which in her creeds she has ever taught. It implies that the restless mind of man has been at work upon the whole subject matter of religion; and when we find that variety and even discrepancy have been so redundant upon points so manifold, and even so important, we are the more impressed by the instructive fact that a barrier has been preserved against which indeed the waves have beaten, but without effect: thus far they have gone and no farther; the faith has endured its trials, though sharper than of gold in the fire; and it stands at this moment in the very frame to which fourteen and fifteen hundred years ago it was modelled. Next, it is in itself, when wisely used, a collateral sign, indicating to us in no small degree

what are matters of faith, and what are matters of opinion. Where the Church has been very greatly divided, a probable evidence is afforded that the question at issue is not of faith, though not a demonstrative one, because we have no absolute promise against the falling away even of large portions from the faith. But setting aside controvertible matter, thus much is historically beyond dispute; that Christendom has with a wonderful unanimity, throughout an immense range of time and space, testified to a great body of Christian doctrine contained in the creeds, and always held as fundamental, except by persons who have always been condemned by the Church for its denial, so that in their repudiation of the truth they have thus become unwilling witnesses to its prevalence and authority; and from this fact it is logically clear, that a provision has actually been made of the very description for which, in the first place, we sought, for attesting warmly, and permanently handing down entire, a document of truths which the highest probability, at least, of moral evidence, recommends to us, as containing the essence of the faith.

172. Again: the promise of a Church visibly perpetual, and the authority given her in controversies of faith, and her use of that authority in the adoption of the Christian creeds, affords an easy mode of realising the true Christian principle of comprehension at its *maximum*. If churches were systems of human device, doubtless they would require to exact from their members much more than it is now necessary for them

to do. The Church of England, for example, imposes no other test or formula of doctrine upon her members at large than the creeds which have the consenting testimony of Christendom, and which were adopted by the Church Catholic long before her communion was broken; and the document by which she instructs them in youth (her Catechism) is proportionably simple: how much more so, for example, than the "Shorter Catechism," which occupies the corresponding place in the system of the Assembly of Divines at Westminster. She enters indeed into more detail, and requires the subscription of her Articles, from those who have closer relations with her than that of mere membership; but compare with these the "Confession of Faith." And what is the reason of this difference?—That the Westminster teachers left the basis of Catholic consent, and founding their scheme on private and local judgment, were led, in natural consequence, to fence it about with a jealous particularity in detail, foreign to the Catholic spirit and practice, and to exact positive affirmations upon a multitude of matters which had before been left open.

The desire for comprehension becomes abusive at that point when, for the sake of including persons, we begin to suppress and exclude principles; and therefore the Church, as being the body best entitled, and most qualified to point out to us what are the principles we are bound to include, does likewise most clearly and safely ascertain for us how far the inclusion of persons may be carried, and thus supplies us

with the second of the three provisions which, as it has already appeared, would be so desirable.

173. It remains indeed undeniable, that, either under the system of the Church or any other, disputes may arise respecting conformity on subordinate points, after the main ones have been brought to a settlement; and obstinacy on one or on both sides may push them to extreme lengths, with great detriment to religion. It is impossible to find a remedy for every difficulty which human weakness may create, or caprice imagine; but while in matters of discipline we can generally submit even to what we more or less may regret, in matters of faith we cannot make a profession to which the conscience does not respond; and therefore the system of the Church, as it exists among us, is eminently favourable to the true and sound principle of comprehension, by its preventing the creation of new articles of faith, and thereby the exaction of undue or needless terms of communion.

174. And now we have to inquire whether the system of the Church does not supply us also with a rule whereby a wide liberty of opinions, and a genuine charity of interpretation, may be secured in connection with the integrity of the faith. The Church, by virtue of her ability to give the faith a stronger and more effectual attestation than it can receive through any other human, I ought to say through any merely human, medium, can likewise afford to leave many questions open which a purely argumentative and technical theology, looking more to logical symmetry,

and the abstract compactness of a system, than to the Divine promise for strength, would studiously foreclose. On the very same principle, while a weak government is suspicious, a strong one may be liberal. Thus the Church does not tie her members to the dogma of final perseverance, nor, on the other hand, does she require them to renounce it: and thus, by implication, she condemns as bigotry not the adoption of the one or of the other opinion, but the desire to enforce it, and to make it a condition of communion; and that exemption, which in such matters she leaves to each of us from her own dominion, she does her best to guarantee for us against the tyranny of those who, founding their whole religion upon private opinion, naturally fall into the error of requiring for the whole the same kind and degree of assent, and are often intolerant upon matters indifferent, while they ought only to be strict on matters essential. Further, if the spontaneous candour of their temperaments happily instructs them that it is too much to require from all men uniformity of opinion upon a great multitude of questions, and if, in consequence, they set about relaxing somewhat of their rigour, they may fall into a yet worse error than that from which they had just escaped. It avails them not to adopt a sound rule, namely, that of distinction between things which are fundamental, and things which are not, unless they herewith apply the best criterion to enable them to judge, to which class this and that topic may belong. If they take as a criterion their own individual judg-

ment, or the fashion of the day, or that of the class with which they may happen to be connected, the probability is, that in many points, while they seek to be liberal, they will be latitudinarian by placing matters of faith in the category of non-essentials, and at the same time also intolerant, by placing matters of mere opinion in the category of vital doctrines.

175. But the Church, by giving us the best criterion, secures us, as far as may be, on this head. She teaches us what are those truths for which we ought to contend as absolutely fundamental: by all, this will be admitted true, so far as regards a great body of doctrine. It may be said that the creeds do not absolutely contain all things essential; that we are not taught that nothing is of faith except what may be explicitly read in them; but the practice of the Church makes good whatever might have seemed to be wanting to the sufficiency of our criterion. By her own example she tells us what are the varieties of opinion we may tolerate:—they are those which she tolerates herself. Whatever is compatible with a genuine reception of the symbols of Christian truth, and with a conscientious adherence to her communion, is fit matter for the reciprocation of brotherly indulgence and of charitable understanding. She rejects that spurious bond of union,—coincidence in a set of opinions arbitrarily chosen; she supplies that sound one,—concurrence in holding the scheme of truths established by the best authority, and long tried by time and its vicissitudes, and in the communion of the body of

Christ; and we offend against the spirit of charity when we make fictitious articles of faith for ourselves, and would exact their reception from the consciences of our brethren, as if the faith itself was not unhappily the occasion of enough of scandal, bitterness, and divisions among men, but each of us must frame a new system, and write on it the name of the everlasting Gospel, in order to their indefinite multiplication.

176. After having already considered the matter of imputation brought against Church principles from their supposed effects on the relations between ourselves and our dissenting brethren, and having on the other hand, shown their positive fitness to facilitate union in religion, let us now look for a few moments at the peculiar capacity for that purpose which the Church of England appears to possess, and at the claim she urges on this very ground, that by them she is placed in a position eminently fitted to become a centre of union to Christians at present diverging on this side and on that. I would now wish to fasten attention on the fact, that the ancient doctrine of the English Reformers concerning the constitution of the Church does, and, so far as I can see, does alone open something like a way towards the reunion of Christians. In spite of all that men say loosely or perversely against the duty and need of visible union, there is evidently a latent sense of that duty and that need, (which is more deeply seated in our instincts than in our clear consciousness,) wherever the Christian faith has been inwardly received and retained.

We perceive this instinct of truth battling, though unequally, with false argumentation, oftentimes reviving, and hardly anywhere to be altogether extinguished. We see it qualifying the irregularities to which zeal is liable, emerging, though disguised, in efforts for partial reunions, such as that recently effected between the Scottish Church establishment and one of the bodies of Presbyterian dissenters in that country; and also like that attempted very recently between certain classes of Dissenters—I believe the Independents and Baptists—of this country, and the corresponding bodies in America. We see it dictating indirectly many of the reproaches now uttered against Church doctrine, by producing a soreness that can hardly be accounted for, except by a sense that something is wrong. There is then, and God be thanked for it, yet remaining a strong though indistinct sentiment in favour of visible unity among Christians; and wherever it may be found, and under whatever conditions, let it be nursed and husbanded as a sacred store, until the day come when it may be profitably exercised and dispensed for the attainment of its object.

177. Now the principle represented in the English Reformation, when separated from its incidental and secondary adjuncts, is this: The removal of interpolated abuses from the actual Catholic system, regulated by the idea and sense of Scripture as it was understood in the ancient Church. Putting out of view for a moment the higher question how far this principle or

law satisfies the intent of Divine revelation, let us put it upon its trial on this very charge respecting unity. Does it tend to facilitate unity or does it not? By unity I mean, of course, visible unity. When I speak of tending to unity, I mean not that we are to entertain any sanguine anticipations that schism will be wholly done away under the most favourable circumstances, but of a capacity which will lead us to unity, if, and in so far as, we will take advantage of it. That unity of name, however, which prevails among sects, in that they are all called Christians, is no substantial unity in the body; for experience has shown it to be not only insufficient in itself, but, in the long run, irreconcileable with unity of spirit and unity of action. Does then the Church doctrine embodied in this idea, that is, adherence to primitive antiquity together with the reform of abuses, really tend towards unity, or does it not? That unity is valuable we are agreed, at least sufficiently for the present purpose. Whether it is attainable there may be much more doubt; but regarding it as at least in some sense a duty, we surely cannot, at least without full inquiry, be prepared altogether to surrender the hope, and even flatly to negative the possibility of its attainment. If then it be as a duty valuable, and if it be not demonstrably unattainable, it is before us as a practical question; and again therefore I return to the point, and I would ask serious men to put this question to themselves:—Looking on the one hand to Protestant, on the other to the Roman bodies, and to the complexion and practice of

the churches of the East—looking to the truths which are retained by so many on both sides, and yet to the distance which separates the extremes—do they see any spot along the whole line at which they may more probably, or could more equitably meet, than at that very spot which is marked out peculiarly and determinately by the general idea (I speak not of arrangements in detail) of the Reformed English Church, namely, the purification of doctrine and discipline, that process being itself governed and limited by adherence both to the doctrinal symbols and to the continuous personal succession of the ancient Church? The Church of England appears to be placed in the very centre of all the conflicting forms of Christianity, like the ancient church between the Arians and Sabellians, and so, that she might almost dare to adopt the words of the great doctor of the West, Saint Augustine:—"Errando in diversa istis, in medio est via quam reliquistis. Inter vos ipsos longiore intervallo separati estis, quam ab ipsâ viâ cujus desertores estis. Vos hinc, vos autem illinc, huc venite: alteri ad alteros transire nolite, sed hinc atque illinc ad nos veniendo invicem vos invenite."*

178. It is easy to say, this is distant, this is difficult, this is visionary and chimerical. The two first I readily admit; but when the mind recurs to that most solemn prayer of the Saviour, at that most solemn hour, for the visible unity of his Church, I feel how impossible it is

* Exp. in Ev. S. Joannis.

to wrench away the hope of this (however distant and however difficult) achievement from the heart of all true belief in Christ, with which it is, as we have seen, vitally and inseparably intertwined. Can then the impartial eye discern any form in which it appears less difficult to return to unity, any basis for its realisation more rational, more practicable, more agreeable to common sense, than that which is presented by the English Church, understood as she is in the light of those very doctrines which have been so unjustly charged as causes of division? Do not let us perplex the idea, at this moment, with consideration of details. In every great project of negotiation, the first step of men, practically wise, is to fix upon some common points and principles—to plant firmly some pillars* in the midst of the chaos of opinions. Now, amidst all the diverging biases of men, is there not, among serious, thoughtful, and docile minds, on the Protestant side, a small voice in the heart which, conformably to the minds of Luther and Melancthon, allows that it had been well if the ancient constitution of the Church could have been preserved, and which clings tenaciously to the idea that Protestantism, legitimately understood, was not a novelty, was not a creation, but was a process of restoration and of recurrence to old forgotten principles? Here then is a basis, so far as these classes of persons are concerned. And among temperate and earnest Roman Catholics, do we not see and

* Mr Carlyle.

hear intimations of regret that the bull of Leo excommunicated Luther, that the bull of Pius deposed Elizabeth? Are there no Tunstals, and no Erasmuses, whose understandings show them how much there has been of cruel and unnecessary persecution, and consequent rending of the body of the Redeemer? Here then is also a basis, so far as these classes of persons are concerned.

179. As respects the Eastern Churches, the barriers are less formidable. They have never pledged themselves to their abuses. They have no self-confident dogma of infallibility.* They, as we are told, have no suspicious jealousy of the circulation of Scripture.† But the condition of the Roman Catholics, considered as a body, is less happy; they have pledged themselves to many things, which many among them would doubtless long to see either rejected, or at the most regarded as indifferent. They have, it may be said, at the unhappy Council of Trent, bound themselves to their abuses of doctrine; and those who have read the remarkable correspondence between Bossuet and Leibnitz on the subject of reunion in the Church, will not be disposed to estimate lightly the obstacles which that council presents to all projects and desires, having union for their end. As it respects the Churches of the

* See for example the work of Nectarius, adv. Papæ Imperium.

† See Hartley's Researches in the Levant. (Seeleys.) The author is not one of those who would be inclined to deal too tenderly with ecclesiastical institutions on account of their mere antiquity.

Roman obedience collectively, it would indeed seem that this is an insuperable hindrance to a general movement; but it may not be absolutely beyond hope, that singly some one or more might lead the way in breaking from the heavy fetters which Trent has imposed upon them. It is simply the supposed ecumenicity of the council, which renders it binding on their conscience. Except for that, they are in the same position with respect to obstacles from ecclesiastical principle, as the English Church occupied antecedently to its Reformation. But the English Church then determined that certain councils which had been asserted or assumed to pass for ecumenical, were not such; and upon a similar question of fact the members of a Roman Catholic national or local Church might, were there by God's grace that mind in them, relieve themselves from that fatal difficulty of their present position, asserting at the same time their freedom from any supremacy by divine right on the part of the Pope, and yet not surrendering the principles of authority and of Catholic consent.

180. Not indeed that this could be done without difficulty or hazard. A similar movement in England three hundred years ago involved much of both, and too probably the risks have increased with continued procrastination. Not that it does not imply and require a disposition, the realisation of which is, according to every human calculation, improbable. It is intended simply to suggest a possible method of escaping from

the apparent consequences* of the sitting of the Council of Trent, according to which Rome would seem to have placed herself in the peculiar position that in the very first attempt to escape from her errors she must give a death-blow to her authority; to legitimate as well as usurped authority, because by that council, asserting in the same breath and as of the same authority her truths and her untruths, she has, so far as in her lay, placed both in the same predicament, to stand or fall together.

181. Simple Protestantism has a legitimate strength of its own: it is this,—that it makes the access to the Holy Scriptures free for all the people; and it derives immense advantage in the controversy with Rome from the evident fairness of exposing to the general eye the authority for the truths to which the general assent of men is asked. We may estimate the amount of this advantage from the anxiety which has been shown by the advocates of Romanism, ever since it has been obliged to appeal to public discussion and opinion, to show that the papal system is not opposed to the free circulation of the Scriptures among the people. The main effect of this extorted assent will be not to remove the suspicions previously entertained, but to confirm, by an unwilling witness, our convictions that the free circulation of the Holy Bible, while it is one

* See Locke (Lord King's Life, ii. 207) who speaks of their being now fixed upon quite different fundamentals by the Council of Trent. The epistles of Grotius, cited by Mr. Hallam (Literature, vol. iii. p. 59 note). Epist. p. 772 (1623). Mr. Coleridge has expressed himself to the same effect. Table Talk, vol. iii. p. 340.

occasion of the difficulties of the Church, is likewise a chief cause of her strength.

Romanism, on the other hand, has also a legitimate strength of its own: it is this,—that it unflinchingly asserts the oneness, the supremacy, the permanency of the faith, and its independence of private opinion; and that it offers the ordinances of grace from hands to which the power of administering them has been committed, if there be truth in history, by the apostles of our Lord, and asserts an authority and power of guidance which they transmitted. Thus of these two hostile principles the one triumphs by tendering the word which God inspired, the other by asserting the Church which the Redeemer established.

182. If one of these were a genuine, and the other a factitious principle of strength, then indeed it would be visionary, and it would be wicked, to dream of uniting them; the new cloth would be pieced into the old garment, and the rent would be made worse.

But if both principles be not only efficacious in controversy, not only popular and influential among men, but built upon the rock of truth, then it is so far from being in itself a thing visionary or impracticable to bring them into harmony and to weave them together like the warp and the woof in cloth, that they must be essentially in harmony at all times, while their antagonism is supposititious and has no ground but in the depraved fancies of mankind. Difficult it may be, and hopeless for a time, to overcome the obstacles which human perverseness and the weakness or errors of the well dis-

posed may offer to the task of realising their co-operation, but no effort is really desperate which is grounded in eternal truths, if indeed there be a ruler of the world who holds the scales of true and false, and will one day adjust them. There is nothing, to my knowledge, in the standards or in the institutions of the Church of England, which should prevent her from combining, each in its full vigour, these severed elements of strength.

183. And the spirit of those services, in which she has ever sought to form the minds of her children by their habitual worship, tends towards a Catholic and not a sectarian consummation of Church affairs. She never teaches us to pray for the progress of this or that mere opinion, much less for the merely negative good of the removal of imperfect forms of religious association; nor even for her own welfare, as a nationally organised member of the great body of Christendom. No, but in the true spirit of the solemn prayer of the Redeemer, she declines to recognise any separate interest which would distinguish one member of the family from the rest, and contemplating a larger object, she supplicates her Lord "that it may please Him to rule and govern His Holy Church universal in the right way;"* she beseeches Him "for the good estate of the Catholic Church;"† and that He will "inspire continually the universal Church with the spirit of truth, unity, and

* Litany.

† "A Collect or Prayer for all conditions of men, to be used at such times when the Litany is not appointed to be said."

concord."* She abhors, in whatever form, the spirit of selfish zealotry and narrow partisanship; we read her mind in the language which one of her worthiest rulers has recently addressed to his clergy:

"Have no divisions among yourselves. Do not say, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos. Range yourselves under no party banners. Call no man master. Neither adopt for yourselves, nor be fond of applying to others any of those party appellations, which are so disagreeable to my feelings, that I will not name them even for the purpose of marking them with censure. Be faithful ministers of the Church; and do not promote, and as far as possible do not know of, any subdivisions in it."†

184. There is in the minds of serious persons a growing sentiment that the powers and principles of absolute unbelief are spreading more and more widely; and while in their most extended operations they are, by whatever diversity of means, gradually sapping the specifically preservative or Catholic principles in the greater number of Christian communities indiscriminately, they are likewise gathering increase of strength, and taking form and body, and indicating symptoms of systematic preparation for the attack upon all belief in Divine revelation. There is a deep and growing though a reluctant conviction, that if, and so far as victory may be destined to infidelity, it will be achieved through the weakness infused into the opposite prin-

* "Prayer for the whole state of Christ's Church militant."
† Bishop of Salisbury's Charge, 1839.

ciple by our religious divisions. The first impulse is to union, for the sake of determined resistance. It is clear that we are weakened by division, and that, even at the best, we could have no strength to spare. It is felt that there are, after all, strong sympathies among all believers in the person and sacrifice of Christ, could they but be extricated, combined, and embodied. And as, in the probable advance of events, human will becomes more and more emancipated from extraneous restraints, and as the development of all good and of all evil principles becomes more free and energetic, the need of union will be more felt among the believers in revealed religion; and the duty will perhaps at length appear so legible to all, that we shall wonder we could ever be indifferent upon the subject, or otherwise than most keenly alive to its practical importance.

185. Well then, some have said, let us unite in the spirit. Not only, however, are we obliged to unite generally, but to unite, moreover, on the ground which God has revealed, and marked out for our union; and it is clear, in a practical view, that for such union among those who hold by revelation there must be some intelligible rule; some bond of connexion divinely given, and yet so palpable as to be stringent. Now there are two which *primâ facie* appear as if they might answer to this description. Some say the profession of belief in Holy Scripture is a sufficient, and was the divinely ordained bond of union. This the great majority deny, though on different grounds, as a part of them at least admit it to be the sole criterion

of truth in the Christian Faith. It seems, however, that there is one fact which should induce those who have proposed Scripture as the sole bond of union, to withdraw from the proposal. It is this, that some sects professing to receive Scripture, and receiving its letter sincerely we must presume, at all events without demonstrable or clear insincerity, do nevertheless by an unbounded license of interpretation so utterly escape from what the Church holds to be its spirit, that they deprive revelation of its distinctive character, and find themselves standing on the same level, and using the same weapons, with Deists, and others who avowedly trust to what is termed the religion of nature, and to that alone.

186. There is but one other term of union which has ever pretended to be Divine, and which therefore has likewise a *primâ facie* aspect of satisfying the conditions we have laid down, for it is clear that we can never find unanimity in the acceptance of any scheme of human device, if it be refused to one of Divine ordinance. Now this term is the Church, antecedent to the canon of Scripture in time, but wholly subordinate to it in authority; having, in doctrine, at least a probable superiority, wherever she has clearly spoken, to the voice of individuals; and exhibiting a visible body, a continuous government, an uninterrupted witness, and an intelligible intercommunion. *In necessariis unitas, in dubiis libertas*, are her canons of belief, as the following clause, *in omnibus caritas*, represents her law of conduct. For the concentration of power,

and the communication of sympathy among those who believe, is there any practicable method except union in this Church under this Scripture? But as in order to do our best towards a right understanding of the great controverted truths of Scripture, we must regard them in connection with the genuine, ascertained, and universal sense of the Church: so to enable the Church once more to exercise her high functions with effect, we must desire to see her everywhere rid of those manifold corruptions which have overspread so large a portion of her surface. Both these conditions will lead those who respectively have adopted them as their rules, towards a position whose essential features are those of the English Church; for her rule has been, as we have seen, to maintain the visible continuity of the Church, and at the same time to correct the abuses which have crept into doctrine through lapse of time, by reference to a primitive standard.

187. Meanwhile the war of faith with scepticism becomes continually hotter and fiercer; the complaint of things transitory against things durable* waxes louder, and the testimony of things durable to the fixed polar truths on which they at once rest and act grows clearer and steadier from day to day. If all the bonds of human obediences are in progressive relaxation, yet the principle of Divine obedience gains in vigour and in influence. If the time be more crooked and perverse than ever, yet we are manifestly

* The Abbé Lacordaire, in his "Mémoire pour le rétablissement des Dominicains en France."

on the way to simplicity. We are as when a company that has halted for refreshment prepares to march; the eater and the sleeper rise from their easy couch upon the sward, and amidst the general hum and stir no law or tendency to order can be discerned; but after a little each will fall into his place, and the whole will be prepared for regular and simultaneous movement. Thus it is with society in this our day. Many a seed has sunk into the soil and lain inorganic for a time, waiting the shower and the sun. But at some instant, under some combination of causes too subtle and too comprehensive for human analysis, the dormant instincts begin to move; and though at first blindly groping their way underground, they gather themselves by degrees into masses, and these masses again unite in a larger mass, until at length they are such that in their collision they shall shake the world. Happy indeed is he who shall be found prepared in that day, and happy the humblest of men, who, with sincere intent, shall have contributed in the very least degree towards such preparation.

188. And if, however encumbered with unconscious prejudice, we keep the beacon-light steadily in our view, we may always take comfort in the midst of our labour. We may remember first how much of the misapprehension which gives occasion to wrath may fairly be ascribed to ourselves, and next that all collisions, whether in speculation or in practical life, are actually and effectively working together for the ultimate and permanent establishment of truth: of truth,

in whose train unity and peace are inevitably found; of truth, whose prevalence we ought first and most of all to desire, not in the aspect which she wears to us, not in this or that specific dress which receives its colour or figure from the contemplating fancy, but for her own sake as such, and in her own substance as such. And we are bound to love that substance which as yet we see but variably, dimly, and remotely, that as yet undeveloped substance, with an affection higher and more absolute than we yield to any of our own subjective impressions received from the everlasting seal; as when sailors, weary of the main, are hastening together towards a common home, which they know to be a home, and to be common, and one may with straining eyes conceive that he beholds it at one point of the compass, and another dreams that elsewhere he sees it breaking the even line of the horizon; but the love and the desire of each are fastened not upon the image scarce conjectured, but upon the reality which that image is taken to denote. So that, wherever we can enjoy the full and firm conviction that others with whom we are in apparent conflict are truly searching for the same object as that to which we have given ourselves, their labours, although in their first direction adverse to our own, ought to be, and in a true though a restricted sense may be, even here and now, a bond of inward union between us.

189. And this sentiment concerning ultimate and essential truth, as distinguished from all her secondary modes or manifestations, I take to be the ordained and

the needful counterpoise in our moral being to that other most necessary and much neglected principle, that, while our absolute love is due to absolute truth alone, yet is it sufficiently revealed to us to claim our allegiance; and we are not so beset in our access to its shrine, and the medium of conveyance is not so hopelessly thickened or disturbed, as to leave us lost amidst varieties countless as the shades of individual passion and affection; as to destroy the presumptive argument of a real correspondence between the sublime lineaments of the original and the best of the terrestrial copies. And we are entitled to appropriate the full comfort of this consideration, provided only we employ the means committed to us of discriminating between the better and the worse, between the probable and the improbable, between the real and the forged resemblance; and firmly act upon the practical obligation, to prefer and to adopt, among rival systems, that which has most of verisimilitude, and to cherish and love it in just and full proportion to that superiority of presumption. Thus, to encourage a brotherly feeling towards those with whom we differ, we must remember that we may be inwardly united while we are outwardly in conflict; and on the other hand, to exclude the poison of indifferentism, we must remember that, for the purposes of duty, the partial truth we possess imposes upon us as real and valid obligations, as the universal truth we hope one day to enjoy. In the harmony of these two principles lies the secret of the peace of mankind, and in a certain, even if a distant, future is folded up the

day when that secret shall be fully and universally revealed.

Illum post cineres auguror ipse diem.

190. It is not indeed difficult to point the finger of scorn at the many differences and divisions of the Christian world, and to argue that, after so much time and labour have been spent with so little fruit upon the ascertainment of the truth of revelation, it is ridiculous still to be busied in its pursuit—at all events, beyond some general formula; or to suppose that it can be material to our spiritual good to draw the demarcating lines of truth and untruth, to that moderate extent which Catholic rules require, among and between the various forms of Christianity, or of Protestantism: and that it is so perilous moreover to charity to pursue these subjects of controversy, that any advantage possibly to be gained in point of precision, by nearer approximation to truth, will be more than counterbalanced by the accompanying detriment to Christian affection.

191. But religious truth is the basis and groundwork of charity. The apostles did not preach to the heathen, as first in order, that they should love one another, but that they should repent towards God, and believe in Christ. Why? We may with reverence reply, because the heart of man is in great part averse to the law of mutual love; because proclamation of that law, without the specific means for procuring obedience to it, would be a mockery, a cruel and dangerous delusion; because by this men would then have seemed,

as they now too often seem, to themselves, to be as it were fulfilling by anticipation the law of Christ, through a way which is shorter as well as more excellent; for the beautiful lessons of charity come smoothly from the tongue and melodiously to the ear, even when they are employed as words alone, or as coverts to facilitate the prosecution of irreligious designs; and men thus arraying themselves in borrowed splendours grow persuaded that they are their own: they talk of charity until they come to believe that it has really pervaded their souls, and has become their ruling sentiment, although that sentiment has taught them to depreciate the doctrines of the faith which is the ground of all charity. Great is the error of those who depreciate love, the end of the commandment: but what avails the recognition of the end, if we wilfully set aside the faith, the divinely ordained and the exclusively effectual means?

192. But in truth there are specific instruments, Divinely appointed, for the production of Christian charity; and these are the truths that are embodied in the creeds as the fundamentals of Christianity, and the Divine influences that are attached to those ordinances of the Redeemer whose ministration he has committed to his Church. Charity then, if it be real, forbids us indeed to divide ourselves from our brethren upon matter of private or equivocal opinion, or to confound such matter with matter of faith, and utterly forbids the needless multiplication of conditions of communion; but she does not forbid—no, she urges and commands—a diligent search for the faith of Christ in its com-

pleteness, and for the Church of Christ in its essential inherent conditions; and this for the very purpose of insuring and perpetuating obedience to the law of brotherly love, which then only can become acceptable to the human heart when it is possessed with the doctrines of Christ and the influences of His Spirit, because they alone so modify the human heart, as to bring it into intrinsic accordance with that law.

193. Let us then put aside the reproach that we are running in the ways of uncharitableness, as for the occasion sufficiently answered—and let us shortly consider whether the pursuit of religious truth, however difficult it be rendered by the complicated and innumerable forms in which human sin, caprice, and weakness, have disguised, and in which the obstinate malice of Satan has counterfeited it, be an unworthy or an unfruitful pursuit? Surely it is the noblest and the most fruitful of all. Surely, after we have attained to the conviction that such and such are articles of faith necessarily to be believed, and that such and such are conditions of the being of the Church, with which we cannot safely dispense; and after taking care to distinguish between these things which are, and others which are not, to be urged and imposed by the strongest persuasions upon the consciences of all; surely, after all this has been done, it still remains for the individual mind, where outward circumstances and opportunities permit such freedom, a refreshing and invigorating pursuit, to study yet more deeply, so it be done more humbly and more cautiously in

just proportion, the revealed mind of God, the great and elevated science of the government of conscience, and all that circle of ordinances and of counsels by which Christ has provided that every degree of genuine desire to be made like unto Him (whether more or less enlightened), from the least to the greatest, shall, even in this world, find its measure of satisfaction, and that men shall find, as they advance in the work of holy obedience, that the range of its labour, and its sweetness and reward, grow together and continually.

194. Grant that the access to truth is difficult, that we are hindered much from without and more from within, that we are evermore liable to yield too much or too little to human respect, to offend against the law of love on the one hand, or the parallel law of zeal for truth on the other. Yet it will generally be found that these obstacles and dangers, serious as they are at all times, are most serious before and not after the understanding has been thoroughly exercised by difficulty; before and not after the thirst for conclusions has been chastened by many checks and taught to give place to the unattractive sobriety of suspense; before and not after charity has been enlarged by acquaintance with the subtleties of error and of sin; before and not after the heart has become thoroughly habituated to feel, and the mind to think, in harmony with the will of a merciful God and Father. And shall it then be said that in other kinds of knowledge it was held laudable to press onwards, within the legi-

timate boundaries by which they are circumscribed, and to enlarge the patrimony of mankind by the results of individual thought and labour; but that in theology, in that science of immeasurable length and breadth, and heighth and depth, we ought to know as little as possible, and to slake the ardour of the mind at the very outset? No, far be it from us to desire such a state of things. The study of theology has its limiting lines; these are the articles of our faith. They are to us axioms, and postulates, and definitions, upon which all attainments must be built, and by which the truth of conclusions must be tested and ascertained. But so manifold and large are the avenues which are opened in the study of things divine, that the mind, conscious of its weakness, values and actually craves these limitations, instead of regarding their existence as a grievance. It is *within* the lines thus drawn that we may still expatiate in the broad fields of that art and system, divinely given, whereby the aggravated and manifold disease of human nature is to be healed, and our complex nature is to receive its discipline and to assume its renovated form. It is within these lines that the discovery even of the minuter details of truth is precious. First, because all pursuit of religious truth is in its own nature calculated to act beneficially on character: secondly, for the value of that which is discovered in itself: and thirdly, because the elucidation of details is subservient to the general design, and aids its accomplishment.

195. And though this be difficult, and though success in it be partial, yet the labour is sweet in its pro-

gress, and glorious in its final reward. If now we wander in the cloud, and if we cannot at every step convince one another with clear vision, and attain to a perfect harmony of movement, yet one day the breeze of heaven will bear that cloud away from the mountain on which we stand, the mountain of the Lord's house. Then it will be seen, too sharply for evasion or for doubt, that truth is positive, invariable, and one; and that God had a certain fixed medium for His revelation, and for her conveyance to our human perceptions; and that some received her and some received her not; and that, of those who received her, some did it with more and some with less of strength and distinctness, some with more and some with less of corrupt admixture; some undervaluing her essence, some strangely combining with her lucid shape the hideous and but half-disguised forms of unrighteousness; some, through holy trust and self-abandonment, enabled to yield up their whole souls to her firm and gentle rule. And will it not, then, be a glorious prize to be found among those who shall come nearest, were it but by one degree, to that full essence of the holy faith in which the Redeemer taught it, and which will naturally and generally be found to be combined with the nearest degree of conformity in the affections to His image? Doubtless, if to appreciate the use of the understanding were to undervalue that deeper science of the affections, if there were any incompatibility, any even the slightest opposition, between the exercise of the one and of the other, we should do well to forego even the intellectual discipline, rather

than dry up the living fountains of the heart; but yet reason is a genuine and glorious gift, and an instrument of the highest order for the attainment of truth: and there is no natural opposition but a natural concord between the exercise of reason and the growth of the affections; and the true progress of a man is dependent in great measure on that union. Surely then it is best for us to dedicate and devote, according to the measure of our means, the whole man, with all his faculties, to this ennobling labour in the deep rich mine; to this task of pressing towards the mark for the prize; to this high contention of the brotherhood of love, where the victory of one is not the defeat of another, but where every competitor may be a conqueror, where it is difficult for any man to advance in grace himself without also helping his brother onward, and wherein every distinction once earned, however small it may now appear to the eye of flesh, shall remain visibly and eternally glorious, when those petty spaces which separate the gradations of earthly magnitude and minuteness shall have waned into pale insignificance.

196. And here I close, at length, this review of the religious position of the Church of England under the circumstances of the day: of course not venturing to assume that these pages can effect in any degree the purpose with which they are written, of contributing to her security and peace; but yet full of the most cheerful anticipations of her destiny, and without the remotest fear either of schism among her children, or of any permanent oppression from the State, whatever

may befal the State itself. She has endured for ten years, not only without essential injury, but with a decided and progressive growth in her general influence as well as her inward vigour, the ordeal of public discussion, and the brunt of many hostile attacks, in a time of great agitation and disquietude, and of immense political changes. There was a period when her children felt no alarms for her safety: and then she was in serious peril. Of late their apprehensions have been violently and constantly excited; but her dangers have diminished; so poor a thing, at best, is human solicitude. Yes, if we may put any trust in the signs that are within her and upon her, if we may at all rely upon the results of the patient and deliberate thought of many minds, upon the consenting testimony of foes and friends, the hand of her Lord is over her for good, to make her more and more a temple of His spirit and an organ of His will. Surely He will breathe into her anew and more and more the breath of life, and will raise up in her abundantly power in the midst of weakness, and the sense of power in the midst of the sense of weakness—of weakness in so far as she is an earthen vessel, of power inasmuch as she is a heavenly treasure abiding therein. The might that none can withstand, the wisdom that none can pierce, the love that none can fathom, the revelation of truth whose light faileth not, the promise that never can be broken;—these are the pillars of her strength whereon she rests, we may trust, not more conspicuous by their height than secure upon their deep foundations.

APPENDIX.

A.—Page 248.

The descendant of Dr. Doddridge, in editing the Correspondence and Diary of his ancestor, gives the following account of the theory of ordination among English dissenters:—

"Ordination, as practised in accordance with the canons of Episcopacy, is entrusted to the bishops, and has two degrees. The first, investing the candidate with the office of a deacon, and the second with the functions and authority of the priesthood. The preliminary step comprehends three important points: evidence as to character, an examination as to a certain advance made in general learning, and a declaration of faith by a subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles. The rank of a deacon conveys the power of performing all religious rites, public and private, save the administration of the Eucharist. The dissenters practise ordination only in the second or higher sense; and these indeed with such peculiar modifications that the word becomes in a manner misapplied, and the term confirmation might be more appropriately employed.

"Each separate dissenting church society individually establishes its own regulations and discipline, and exercises a perfect and irresponsible authority in all spiritual matters within its own confines, its minister being no more than its leading head. Dissenting pastors are not therefore ordained to enforce spiritual order by a superior ecclesiastical power, and then placed over any particular church; but a candidate is first recommended to a church, with such evidence as to his scholastic acquirements, piety, and general character, as may be deemed satisfactory, opportunities having been given for ascertaining

his talents as a preacher: that candidate, if approved, receives an invitation from the church, and is thereby, in principle, fully authorised to act as its pastor.

"The ordination which follows the invitation is therefore rather a regulation of custom than an essential institution, and this indeed the mode of its performance may testify. The new pastor and his church mutually invite their friends among the neighbouring ministers, who attend on a certain day to sanction his installation by their presence, and to offer public prayers for his success in the new relation into which he *has been* admitted. A confession of faith is sometimes given by their new brother; and in the good old times (as will appear in the instance of Dr. Doddridge), a form of engagement towards the church, termed ordination vows, was also tendered, and bestowed a much greater solemnity upon the rite than it now possesses; but neither the confession nor the vows could be then demanded as a right. The ceremony therefore confirms rather than bestows authority, and must be repeated as to the same individual if he remove to any other church."

In conformity with this fundamental difference in the theories of ordination, we find that in the year 1571, when the puritans in the House of Commons appointed a committee to confer with the bishops concerning the confirmation of a confession of faith by parliament, they left out from the articles of 1562, together with other articles relating to discipline, that which respects the consecration of bishops.*

* See Neal's Puritans, chap. v. He adds: "By a clause in this Act, the parliament admits of ordination by presbyters without a bishop, which was afterwards disallowed by the bishops in this reign."

B.—Page 320.

I readily admit that there may be points in which the citation of testimonies from individual ministers or even rulers of the Church would be quite inconclusive, and equally applicable to either side of an argument. But it is not so, as I believe, in the case before us. While the press teems with explicit and weighty declarations, the stronger for being generally incidental, of the doctrines of authority and succession in the Church, and while some of our writers, with just or excusable apprehensions of excess, endeavour to moderate them, some again altogether to explode those particular forms of statement in which these truths have been advanced by others, I, at least, am quite unaware that any number of individual clergymen, much less that any considerable proportion of the ministers of the Church, either has propounded categorically, or has more circuitously insinuated, the contradictory positions, that the Church is without authority in controversies of faith; and that there is an ordinary ministry in the Church, not conferred by episcopal ordination, legitimate and valid like that which is so conferred.

On the contrary, I rely even less, perhaps, upon the first series of quotations,* which I have made from uncontroversial writings, than upon those which I shall subjoin to them,† taken from the publications of men who have referred to the writers at Oxford, but either in terms of materially qualified approbation or of absolute censure. I rely much on their testimony to prove how unjustly these cardinal principles of our Church polity are confounded with the particular and private opinions of any teachers, inasmuch as no one of them denies the authority of the Church, or asserts that any ministry among us not held by succession and episcopal ordination is of the same

* Marked I. † Marked II.

certain validity with, or similar in kind to, that which is conferred by the bishops of the Church.

At all events, I am estimating very moderately the effect even of this body of testimony, when I plead its sufficiency at least to prove that the maintenance of the doctrines of Authority and Succession is very far indeed from being peculiar to the authors of the series entitled Tracts for the Times, with those, if such there be, who profess adherence or allegiance to them.

The reader will observe that this most incomplete list embraces our published sentiments of nine of our bishops, of whom the most remote is Bishop Heber.

I.

1.—*Succession.*

We find accordingly that our Lord, on His own departure from the world, committed, in the most solemn terms, the government of His Church to His apostles. We find these apostles, in the exercise of the authority thus received, appointing elders in every city, as dispensers of the word and the sacraments of religion; and we find them also appointing other ecclesiastical officers, who were to have the oversight of these elders themselves, and who, in addition to the powers which they enjoyed in common with them, had the privilege, which the others had not, of admitting, by the imposition of hands, those whom they thought fit, to the ministerial office.

And it is not too much to say that we may challenge those who differ from us to point out any single period at which the Church has been destitute of such a body of officers, laying claim to an authority derived by the imposition of hands from the apostles themselves; or any single instance of a Church without this form of government, till the Church of Geneva, at first from necessity, and afterwards from a mistaken exposition of Scripture, supplied the place of a single bishop by the rule

of an oligarchical presbytery.—Bishop Heber, Sermons in England, Serm. xii.—(O. T. III.)

2.—*Succession.*

Accordingly the apostles ordained successors to themselves, and took measures for perpetuating in the Church a standing ministry of diverse orders and gradations. In so doing, they showed in what sense we are to interpret our Lord's assurance that "He would be with them always, even unto the end of the world."

We are speaking now, it will be recollected, of what in the language of ecclesiastical history is emphatically called the Church; that which has from age to age borne rule, upon the ground of its pretensions to apostolical succession.—Bishop Van Mildert, Bampton Lectures, Lecture VIII.—(O. T. III.)

3.—*Succession.*

Matt. xxviii. 20.—A promise not occasional or temporary, like that of miraculous powers, but conveying an assurance that Christ himself will, in spirit and in power, be continually present with his Catholic and Apostolic Church; with the bishops of that Church, who derive from the apostles, by uninterrupted succession; and with those inferior but essential orders of the Church, which are constituted by the same authority and dedicated to the same service.—Bishop Jebb, Pastoral Instructions, Discourse I. p. 6.

4.—*Authority.*

They (the English reformers) felt that, as the universal consent of all men, in all ages, is allowed to be the voice of nature, so the unanimous concurrence of councils, churches, bishops, and fathers, ought to be received as the voice of the Gospel.—Ibid., p. 20.

Authority.

Though I willingly admit that the doctrine of infallibilty, in the dark ages, was happily instrumental in preserving the Catholic verities, I do believe that in more advanced times some far better safeguard may be substituted; the rule of Vincentius Lirinensis, for instance, properly explained and limited. —Bishop Jebb to Mr. Knox, Letter CV. (July 10, 1811.)— See also Appendix to Bishop Jebb's Sermons.

5.—*Succession.*

Matt. xxviii. 20.—A promise this, which cannot be supposed to have respect to the persons of the apostles alone, who in the common course of nature were soon to be taken from the world, to the end of which the promise itself was to extend. . . . . In conformity with this meaning, the apostles, who were themselves holy men and full of the Holy Ghost, did send other persons; to whom again they gave power and authority to send others, through whom the office of ministers of the Gospel has been handed down in regular and uninterrupted succession from the apostles to the present time.—Bishop Mant, Parochial Sermons, Serm. xxvii.

6.—*Succession and Authority.*

Whilst we are faithful to our ministerial trust, zealous for the salvation of souls, actively and discreetly bent on doing good in every way and unto all within our appointed charge, spending and being spent for the sake of Christ and His Gospel, conforming for conscience' sake to every required ordinance of the Church, and ever in our public ministrations submitting our private opinions to its authoritative interpretation of God's word, as embodied, out of the Scriptures, in its liturgy and articles, we have no need to fear for the cause of truth, which shall ultimately prevail: nor for the stability of

that branch of Christ's Church, which thus appeals for the verity of its doctrine to Scripture and the earliest antiquity, and traces its ministry upwards through the successive laying on of hands unto our Lord himself.—Charge by the Bishop of Barbadoes to the Clergy of British Guiana, 18th July, 1839. Demerara, 1839.

7.—*Succession.*

He that will discharge aright such a high commission must "not take this honour upon himself, but be called of God as was Aaron"—there must be an obedience resting upon a Divine command.—The Apostolical Commission, a Sermon by the Bishop of Calcutta, p. 21, 1834.

An authority there must be, and an obedience on the footing of that authority, in the case of every real minister—an authority external by the voice of those to whom it is committed to "call and send ministers into the Lord's vineyard," and an authority internal, &c.—Ibid.

Accordingly it is confessed that, in point of fact, for fifteen centuries after the time of the apostles, no government of the Church obtained but that which was administered by ministers who received in direct succession from them the exclusive rights of superintendence and ordination, who were called, in the age immediately following that of the apostles, by the same name as that which distinguishes them from presbyters at present, that of episcopi or bishops.—Ibid., p. 22.

It is enough that the office is clearly of Divine institution.—Ibid., p. 24.

Christian Church, in contradistinction from heathenism; apostolical, in contradistinction from modern, unepiscopal forms of government; Catholic, in contradistinction from heresy; reformed, in contradistinction from Roman Catholic corruption.—Ibid., Appendix, p. 38.

8.—*Authority.*

Thus did our Reformers fall back upon the word of God as the sole and sufficient rule of faith; while they held that, in the interpretation of that word, the authority of the earliest and purest ages of the Church, the consent of the fathers of Catholic antiquity, was not to be set at nought by each man's private opinion and unassisted judgment; but rather to be carefully sought for, and reverentially followed and received.—The Bishop of Salisbury's Sermon, "The Church the Teacher of her Children," p. 5.

9.—*Authority and Succession.*

We have learned to look more closely to the origin of our own branch of the Catholic Church; and finding that it was founded on primitive usage, before the corruptions of Romanism had taken effect, we assert more boldly its independence and its antiquity, as well as its purity and its consonance with Scripture. We have learned better to value and more firmly maintain the dignity of our orders derived from the bishops, who are themselves descended in an unbroken and uninterrupted succession from the apostles: and we have learned to insist more strenuously on the virtue and efficacy of the holy Sacraments, administered by those to whom the office of imparting them has been duly communicated.—Charge by the Dean of Chichester, May, 1839, p. 25. (Parker, 1839.)

10.—*Succession.*

The established clergy are the appointed lineal successors of those unto whom the commission just recited* was first given by Christ.—Sermon for the National Society by the Hon. and Very Rev. Dr. Pellew, Dean of Norwich, 1838.

11.—*Authority.*

The Anglican Church, then, imposes upon her clergy that

* That of Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

they should teach nothing to the people save what is contained in Holy Scripture: but in regard to ascertaining WHAT doctrine is really contained therein, she refers them to the declared and recorded unanimous consent of Catholic antiquity. Doubtless, as that consent has been handed down to us, from the very first, in authorised creeds, and in harmonious expositions of doctrinal texts which so repeatedly occur in all our early ecclesiastical documents.

Such a regulation may be very wise, as, with due submission, I venture to think; or it may be very foolish, as, peradventure, another person may stiffly maintain. But, at all events, wise or foolish, judicious or injudicious, it is, in naked matter of fact, the declared regulation of the reformed Church of England.—Postscript to Preface of "The Primitive Doctrine of Justification," by the Rev. G. S. Faber, Prebendary of Salisbury: dedicated to the Lord Bishop of Chester; p. xxxvi.

12.—*Succession.*

I could have wished on this occasion, did the time allow, to speak of the many other great encouragements which we have as ministers of the Church of England.

First, as being assured of our rightful authority and commission to execute the office of the ministry, conveyed to us through a line of Christian pastors from our blessed Lord, that great Shepherd of the sheep.—Ordination Sermon preached at Ely by the Rev. W. Selwyn, Canon of Ely and Rector of Branstone, on Advent Sunday, 1838, p. 19.

13.—*Authority.*

The first (qualification) I would specify is the union of a sincere genuine love of personal liberty of conscience with a no less firm conviction of the duty of Christians, as a primary religious obligation, to acknowledge their allegiance to the Church, and to render a hearty obedience to her authority as Christ's representative.—Consecration Sermon by the Rev. J. E. Tyler, 1828, p. 13.

14.—*Authority.*

All this was distinctly recognised by the Reformers of the English Church, whatever it may have been by those of other countries. They made no alteration in the constitution of the Church; they saw in the Roman Catholic Church the true foundation and framework of a Church; but they saw also that on this foundation had been laid, and into this framework had been woven, many and gross errors which were calculated to destroy the souls of its members. . . . . And so blessed were they of God with singular discretion, as well as courage, that they achieved the noble result of a Church holding all that is apostolic in doctrine, without letting go one jot of what is apostolic in government. They achieved the result—the only result at which, as Reformers, they could lawfully aim—of making the Church, both in creed and in discipline, what the Church had been in primitive times; removing from it whatsoever had not the sanction of Scripture and antiquity, and retaining whatsoever had. . . . . And therefore, as we would again tell you, were they the Reformers, and nothing more than the Reformers, of the Church. You sometimes hear or read of the fathers of the English Church, the name being given to the Reformers: but the name is most falsely applied. The fathers of the English Church are the apostles and those apostolic men who lived in the early days of Christianity, and handed down to us what was held as truth, when there were the best means for ascertaining and defining it. We acknowledge no modern fathers—it were to acknowledge a modern birth. We claim to be the ancient Church, we fasten on the Roman Catholic the being the modern—the modern, not in constitution, for therein we have both the same date, and that date apostolic; but the modern in a thousand innovations on genuine Christianity—Christianity as preached by Christ and St. Paul—Christianity as exhibited by the writers of the first four centuries of the Church.—Rev. H. Melville's Sermons, vol. ii. p. 110.

15.—*Authority.*

We of the Church of England have a great advantage, that our minds are made up upon all important matters of doctrine or discipline. We are not thrown upon the Bible like a vast ocean, without chart or compass, but we have fixed tracks and certain landmarks whereby to direct our course; for we have solemnly admitted the authority of the church, and submitted ourselves to her teaching. We gladly and thankfully accept her for our guide.—Sermon by the Rev. R. Durnford, rector of Middleton, preached at the visitation of the Bishop of Chester, May 31, 1838, and published at the desire of the bishop and clergy, p. 12.

16.—*Succession.*

Supposing questions to arise about Church government, or the authority of our spiritual heads, unless we are content to rest the defence of our present form upon the grounds of fitness and convenience alone, we must be able to demonstrate, from contemporary evidence, that the government of the Church, from the apostles' days downwards, has ever been vested in bishops. (*et seq.*)—Ibid., p. 16.

17.—*Authority.*

It is plain that the tradition which our Church regards in matter of faith is nothing contrary to the Word of God, is nothing added to the Word of God, is nothing put in comparison with, far less set above, the Word of God; but is that interpretation of the Word of God itself which has been maintained in the Church from the time of the apostles, and has been handed down, through the medium of historical records, from their age to our own.

Such, in brief, is the plea which we have to advance in behalf of the doctrinal formularies of our Church, . . . because we can trace the doctrines which they affirm, as far as historical

investigation will reach, as the received doctrines of that Catholic and Apostolic Church which we believe that God has promised to "guide into all truth." . . . .

Thus, by the application of the test of tradition, the question whether our Church has rightly interpreted the Gospel is changed, from a mere conflict of individual opinions, into the definite and practicable inquiry, whether her doctrines are primitive and catholic doctrines. . . . .

The Church of England has provided the best security for the promulgation of purely evangelical doctrine by recognising Scripture as the single source of truth, and by rejecting, in the interpretation of it, all the unauthorised dictates of mere private and individual judgment, when opposed to the primitive doctrines of the Catholic Church of Christ.—Ordination Sermon, preached in Ripon Minster, January 13, 1839, by the Rev. Charles Dodgson, "honoured by the approbation and published by the desire of the Right Rev. the Bishop of Ripon," pp. 12—14.

18.—*Authority.*

I do not in the least withdraw my assent from the principle that the Church has power to decree rites and ceremonies, and has authority in matters of faith. . . . .

The whole glory and dignity of the Church, all its (her?) capacity to be the teacher of men, rests upon the assurance of her connexion with an invisible Lord—of his presence being constantly with her—of her uttering his voice. Where this faith exists in strength and liveliness, the feeling of submission to ministerial authority will be very vigorous, and quite unslavish. Each person will feel that he is putting himself into the best position for learning that which he wants to know, for being a man and a freeman, when he is listening to the voice of his appointed teacher. The particular minister, in like manner, will be most desirous to pay homage to the more general minister set over him; and when disorders are great, or difficulties pressing, no one will doubt but that the Uni-

versal Church will make its voice heard clearly and satisfactorily in a council.—The Kingdom of Christ, vol. ii., pp. 46, 47, by the Rev. F. D. Maurice, chaplain of Guy's Hospital, and Professor of English Literature in King's College.

19.—*Succession.*

And the priestly arrangement was, we say, carried into a higher region, when the universal dispensation succeeded to the national. . . . .

We say that, if there was need to affirm the unity of Christ's body, and the living connexion of different ages in Him, under the Jewish or national dispensation, that necessity has not ceased under the Christian or Catholic dispensation; that, if a regular sequence among those who were the outward and living witnesses of Christ's presence was the mean chosen by God for making this affirmation, we can have no right or reason to substitute any other; that only the accident of this succession being confined to a family, and so hereditary, which was formally set aside when Christ chose his twelve apostles, has been abandoned; lastly, that what remains after this change does not in the least infringe upon the inward call. . . . Such is the principle of apostolical succession.—Ibid., pp. 156, 157.

20.—*Authority.*

The man of business and of the world, who is, in point of talent and general information, on a par with his minister, and cannot but form some judgment on his teaching, but who has little leisure for the deep investigation of truth, will find his surest safeguard in the formularies and liturgies of his own Church, which, as we have seen, are based on the doctrine of Scripture as received from primitive antiquity. . . . .

For Protestantism itself, at least English Protestantism, was built on the Scriptural interpretation of a pure antiquity, discarding the modern innovations of the Church of Rome.—The English Churchman, by the Rev. W. Gresley, p. 30.

21.—*Succession.*

In order to admit continually new members to the Church, and to minister to them in holy things, the apostles instituted a threefold order of priesthood, each having its various functions for the edification of the Christian body.

Such was the simple constitution of the Apostolic Church of Christ. It was an organised society or brotherhood, endowed with great and glorious privileges, consisting of duly-baptised Christians and duly-ordained ministers. Such it has continued from the time of the apostles to the present; and such, we doubt not, it will continue (for we have God's own promise) even to the end of the world.—Ibid., p. 45.

22.—*Authority.*

Foremost among the daughters of that Jerusalem which is above stood the Church of England. Delivered, by the mercy of her God, as a bird out of the net of the fowler, without losing any of her golden feathers in her struggle to escape, she came forth in primitive and apostolic beauty; and protesting against the modern errors of Rome, and pronouncing the creed of churches and councils of old, and appealing for its truth to Holy Scripture, she proclaimed aloud, "This is the faith which we have received, this is the faith wherein we stand."—Quarterly Sermon on the Errors of Popery, by the Rev. Lord Arthur Hervey, rector of Ickworth, p. 12. Bury, 1838.

The apostolic power vested in our bishops persuades us to the same things as the voice of Scripture and the primitive Church. We are still free to test the truth of any and every doctrine which lays claim to Scripture authority in the same way that Hegesippus, Irenæus, Tertullian, Vincent of Lerins, and a host of catholic fathers did, viz. by comparing the testimony of many churches, and holding that wherein they all agree, and nothing else, as catholic truth.—Ibid., note, p. 19.

23.—*Authority.*

When they who sometimes were afar off were brought nigh, and the sacred edifice was rebuilt "upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone," the Christian Church, being constituted on earth the Church of the living God, was formally invested with its high office, and became "the pillar and ground of the truth." —Sermon at Huddersfield, October 28, 1836, by the Rev. C. A. Thurlow, vicar of Scalby, p. 7.

We are thus compelled to recognise the permanent utility of an authorised interpretation of those inspired Scriptures which, as the apostle testifies, the unlearned and unstable wrest to their own destruction.—Ibid., p 12.

24.—*Authority.*

The Roman Catholic says, "The whole question, in truth, lies between the ancient faith and an innovation; between the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church and a modern apostacy." I believe I state the question in a manner in which every Roman Catholic must desire to have it proposed; and my wish would be, that the Roman Catholic should be met upon those statements—that we too should discuss the question as one between the Apostolic Church and an apostacy—and that we should address ourselves to the easy task of proving that the Church of Rome is the apostacy, that we are members of the Catholic Church, and that it is in defence of the Catholic Church our controversy is undertaken.—Sermon preached on May 5, 1836, for the Reformation Society, by the Rev. Mortimer O'Sullivan, p. 10.

25.—*Succession.*

How remarkably favoured is a clergyman's position, in respect of the love of God! He is a shepherd under the great Shepherd, a steward under the great Lord, an ambassador of

the great King. Blessing and instruction pass through his hands to the people. He is the channel of wisdom, peace, and comfort to them, ... sojourning indeed among worldly powers and principalities, but with his heart loyal and true to the King whose authority and commission he bears,—content to remain, as long as his Master desires, for the benefit of the Church on earth, but longing to be with Christ, which is far better.

May God, of his infinite mercy in Christ, grant to all those whom he appoints to be pastors of his flock on earth the circumcision of his love; that they may be holy and blameless, and zealous and faithful in their sacred office all the days of their lives.—Sermons by the Rev. G. Moberly, D.C.L., Head Master of Winchester College. Sermon xviii.

26.—*Succession.*

If in the apostles' age, and those immediately following it, there were such orders as the opening of the preface* already quoted affirms, it surely indicates a lack of modesty, to say the least, to quit so high a precedent, even if it is not deemed an imperative one; and those may be deemed at least the safest who refuse to accept religious offices on a plan of more questionable and doubtful precedent. The whole question, therefore, turns upon the assertion in the preface alluded to; and this has never been disproved.—Sermon on the Ministerial Succession, by the Rev. F. Merewether, Rector of Coleorton, note, p. 19.

27.—*Succession.*

And this is the ground upon which the ministers of the Church established in this country claim their title and authority in the Church of Christ. . . . . I can have no right to fill the office of your spiritual pastor, or to attempt to administer Christ's Holy Sacraments, except it be because I have

* To the Ordination Offices.

received commission and authority so to do from one who had power and authority himself to give me that commission: . . . . so it is a positive fact that the bishops who occupy the different bishoprics in this country can trace back every one of their predecessors, name by name, through whom the original commission, given by Christ to the apostles, has been transmitted from age to age, by prayer and the imposition of hands, to them, and through them to all the clergy throughout the kingdom.—Sermons by the Rev. F. Fulford, rector of Trowbridge, Sermon ii., p. 24. London, 1837.

28.—*Succession.*

And lastly, in the present days of laxity and spiritual insubordination, when the claims of an apostolic ministry are so generally overlooked, and, I may even add, so ignorantly and superciliously derided, I have ventured to assert, from time to time, the unpalatable truth that the Divine warnings against the sin of schism can by no human authority, or popular agreement, be annihilated or abolished; that Christians now are bound as much as Christians in the days of St. Paul to continue in the apostles' fellowship, as well as in the apostles' doctrine, not forming themselves into new communions upon new principles, or heaping unto themselves teachers of their own appointment, but adhering conscientiously to the one great evangelical communion—the Church universal—which was founded upon the day of Pentecost, which has been perpetuated ever since by a succession of apostolic pastors, and against which, according to our Saviour's never-failing promise, the gates of hell shall not prevail.—Farewell Sermon at Whitchurch, by the Rev. W. Sinclair, incumbent of Trinity Church, Leeds. (Parker, 1837.)

29.—*Succession.*

The authority which the venerable fathers of our Church are now about to communicate we believe to be derived from Christ himself; we believe that it forms one link in that golden

chain of ministerial succession which, through the blessed Redeemer, descended from the footstool of the eternal throne; which has bound the true Church of Christ together, and to the heavenly sanctuary; which has preserved it pure and entire amid all its trials and persecutions, its vicissitudes and dangers. . . . .

We discern the care with which, under Divine direction, the apostolic rank or order is kept up by the appointment of Matthias, of Paul and Barnabas, of Timothy and Titus, of the seven angels or presidents of the Asiatic churches. We have unquestionable historical evidence that immediate successors to them were appointed, men who were to fill their place, and that such was everywhere the order of the Church: as Clement at Rome, Polycarp at Smyrna, Ignatius at Antioch, and so on; and that these, under the appellation of bishops, formed a rank or order corresponding with that of the apostles themselves. . . . . On this position he rests: namely, that during the time of the apostles themselves, and that in the period immediately subsequent, the discipline of the Church was administered under three distinct clerical orders; that in those times the concurrent voice and concurrent practice of the whole Christian Church expressed the sentiments of the apostles themselves.—Consecration Sermon, preached October 8, 1837, by the Rev. E. B. Ramsay, minister of St. John's Chapel, Edinburgh.

30.—*Authority.*

The Romish Churchman can only be refuted by the Catholic Churchman; and therefore the divines of our Church meet the Romanists on this ground, and contend against them on their own principles; and they have proved, as clearly as any moral and historical argument can prove, that the Romish Church has erred, not because she has taken Catholic antiquity for a guide, but because she has not taken it; that she is wrong, not in her adherence to ancient and uniform tradition, but in her departure from it.—Ibid.

31.—*Succession.*

This new power is neither apostolical nor catholic, and is as unwarrantable as the sudden assumption of the power of ordaining by non-conforming presbyters; for they never received that power, but merely their own personal orders, solemnly calling God to witness at the time that they would pay canonical obedience to the bishop who ordained them presbyters.—Letters to the Rev. H. Melville by the Rev. C. Smith, Fellow and Tutor of St. Peter's College, Cambridge, p. 182.

32.—*Authority.*

The witness of the divinity of the great Head of the Church chosen by himself is, that his Catholic and Apostolic Church should be one—one in doctrine and discipline; for the peculiarity of Christianity, as sanctifying the body, is, that doctrine is discipline, and discipline doctrine.—Ibid., p. 197. Vide also pp. 42, 58, 62, 174, 175.

33.—*Succession.*

We have traced the growth of the ecclesiastical constitution planted by the apostles through three successive appointments of Church officers—deacons, presbyters, and bishops—each order invested with distinct functions and privileges. We have seen that presbyters have no authority from Scripture to ordain, but that all precepts on this subject are addressed to persons of episcopal rank. . . . .

Lastly, we have demonstrated that episcopacy, as an apostolical institution, continued universally throughout the world to be the form of Church polity during fifteen hundred years.—Dissertations vindicating the Church of England (Diss. i. ch. iii. pp. 150, 151), by the Rev. John Sinclair, examining chaplain to the Bishop of London, and secretary to the National Society.

34.—*Authority.*

We cannot better explain how far ancient literature is to be rendered available to sacred purposes than by a transcription of a canon set forth by the Church of England in the same year with its Articles:—"Preachers shall not presume to deliver anything from the pulpit as of moment, to be religiously observed and believed by the people, but that which is agreeable to the doctrine of the Old or New Testament, and collected out of the same doctrine by the Catholic fathers and the bishops of the ancient Church." "A wise regulation," observes the judicious and able Dr. Waterland, "formed with exquisite judgment, and worded with the exactest caution."—Ibid., Diss. iii. ch. ii.

35.—*Succession.*

Mr. Witty, once a dissenting minister, in a published letter to the Bishop of Salisbury (Hatchard, 1832), gives the following among his reasons for seeking orders from the Church:—

I. Because the polity of the Church of England is episcopal, and as such of Divine institution, and founded on primitive practice and apostolical authority. . . . Hence, in the Church of England are found the only Scriptural and truly authorised orders of ecclesiastical officers—bishops, priests, and deacons—without which, as Ignatius asserts, there can be no Church. —pp. 3, 4.

X. Because the Church of England has confined the power of ordination to bishops, thereby acting in strict accordance with apostolic precedents and primitive practice.—p. 18.

36.—*Succession.*

Awful is the responsibility attaching upon each one of a class of persons (the clergy) who alone among men have the authoritative means committed to them of awakening, alarm-

ing, and persuading the conscience and the heart, by the terrors and invitations of the glorious gospel.—Jachin, p. 15. Prize Essay, by W. Roberts, Esq., adjudged by Mr. Archdeacon Hodson and Mr. Chancellor Raikes, in 1838, on behalf of the Christian Influence Society.

On the other hand she (the Church) is menaced by a latitudinarian spirit which deems but lightly of her discipline, and those instituted forms and regulations which compose the system of her ecclesiastical government; lightly too of her derivative authority, delivered down by the successive imposition of hands, the symbol of her rule and ordination.—Ibid., p. 91.

I next subjoin the sentiments of one whose name is very great:—

37.—*Authority.*

It is now twenty years since I read Chillingworth's book; but certainly it seemed to me that his main position, that the mere text of the Bible is the sole and exclusive ground of Christian faith and practice, is quite untenable against the Romanists. It entirely destroys the conditions of a Church, of an authority residing in a religious community, and all that holy sense of brotherhood which is so sublime and consolatory to a meditative Christian. Had I been a Papist, I should not have wished for a more vanquishable opponent in controversy. —Coleridge's Table Talk, vol. i. p. 240.

And as the advocacy of such principles as these has been supposed to imply inclination to Romanism, I subjoin two strong passages from the same work of this very great man:—

The present adherents of the Church of Rome are not, in my judgment, Catholics. We are the Catholics. We can prove that we hold the doctrines of the primitive Church for the first three hundred years. The Council of Trent made the Papists what they are.—Ibid., p. 31.

The adherents of the Church of Rome, I repeat, are not Catholic Christians. If they are, then it follows that we Protestants are heretics and schismatics.—Ibid., p. 32.

38.—*Authority.*

The continuance in the Church down to the present period of that apostolic authority, supported by miracles which attended its first institution; the transmission and actual existence on earth of the same heavenly light which first illuminated the inspired messengers of the Word, still revealing and diffusing eternal truth to mankind: these are illusions, obnoxious indeed to ridicule (from which nothing sacred is exempt), yet so true to nature, so congenial to a serious mind, and, I will venture to add, in their own nature so little unreasonable, that it is no wonder if all the argumentation which successive ages have directed against them has not much diminished their authority. Nor will the rage of the fanatic, or the sneers of the sceptic, or even the voice of reason herself, ever suppress the recurrence of so natural a sentiment. Could demonstration explode it, the delusion would still remain, as that irrefragable chain which proves the non-existence of matter is dissipated by our instincts of nature and the evidence of the senses.—The Present State of the Controversy between the Protestant and Roman Catholic Churches, by Mr. Hunter Gordon, p. 34.

See also Dr. Hawkins's Bampton Lectures for 1840, Dr. Elrington's Sermon on the Apostolical Succession (Rivingtons, 1840), Dr. M'Caul's Sermon on the same subject, &c. &c.

II.

1.—*Authority.*

Generally speaking, I may say that, in these days of lax and spurious liberality, anything which tends to recall forgotten truths is valuable; and where these publications (the Tracts for the Times) have directed men's minds to such important subjects as the union, the discipline, and the authority of the Church, I think they have done good service; but there may be some points in which, perhaps from ambiguity of ex-

pression or similar causes, it is not impossible but that evil, rather than the intended good, may be produced on minds of a peculiar temperament.—Charge by the Bishop of Oxford, 1838, p. 20.

2.—*Succession.*

First, then, for the great question of the very foundation and origin of your ministerial charge. Do you derive it in regular succession from those who were invested with it, and with the power of transmitting it, by the great Head of the Church? . . .

Can they,* I ask, without the most shameful disingenuousness, deny that it is the doctrine of our Church at least, be that doctrine true or untrue, that its ministers receive their commission from those who have themselves received authority to confer it in succession from the apostles, and, through them, from our Lord himself?—Bishop of Exeter's Charge, 1839, pp. 59, 63.

3.—*Authority.*

Neither let them forget that the Church itself, in some of its most authoritative formularies, appears at least to favour the opinion which they unsparingly condemn—that tradition has been given to us as an enduring channel of instruction in Christian truth, though not as the authority for any necessary doctrine. For instance, what will they say of the Apostles' Creed? . . . .

A canon of the Convocation of 1571, which, I need not say, is part of the law of the Church, commands preachers to be careful never to teach anything in their sermons, as if to be religiously held and believed by the people, but what is agreeable to the doctrine of the Old and New Testament, and collected from that very doctrine by the Catholic fathers and ancient bishops.—Ibid., pp. 75, 76.

* The clergy.

4.—*Authority.*

Archdeacon Pott, in a Charge having for its object to discountenance any attempt or tendency to add anything to the Scriptures as the rule of faith, writes—

"Let the *quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus,* be the challenge for traditionary testimonies, and we shall never shrink from that test."—Charge to the Clergy of London, May, 1839, p. 31.

He quotes with approbation Stillingfleet's answer to Sargent:—

"These objections do not reach us of the Church of England, which receives the three creeds, and embraces the four general councils, and professes to hold nothing contrary to any universal tradition of the Church." Adding, "We have often offered to put the controversies between us and the Church of Rome upon this issue. We received the Scriptures from universal tradition, derived from all the apostolical churches, so the creeds and the councils, and such an universal tradition is the thing we desire; but as for the Trent creed, our forefathers never knew or received it as part of that faith without which there is no salvation."—Ibid., p. 28.

5.—*Authority.*

I will readily take the tradition of Christian truth along with me as my guide to the knowledge of what Scripture reveals; but I will not exalt my guide into an oracle, nor, because the training hand and voice of the Church have been my first introduction to the Gospel, will I regard this my ecclesiastical education as essential to the due understanding of the Scriptures in order to salvation. As a valid and important confirmation, then, to the evidence of Scripture, on every point of faith and discipline, as a providential guide to the right understanding of the truth revealed in Scripture, and a reasonable inducement to the reception of that truth, I most highly esteem the mass of religious instruction which we familiarly designate

by the name of tradition; but I cannot carry my estimation of tradition beyond this point.—Lecture on Tradition, delivered March 7, 1839, by R. D. Hampden, D.D., Regius Professor of Theology in Oxford.

It was not without good reason, then, that the fathers refused to allow such teachers to appeal to Scripture in proof of their abominations of doctrine. Wisely did they exhort the faithful to adhere strictly and exclusively to the communion of the regular apostolic churches, and to follow that prescription of truth which existed among these in their simple professsion of no other doctrine than that originally delivered by the apostles themselves.—Ibid., p. 47.

6.—*Succession.*

All these persons, however widely they may differ from each other on many points, naturally constitute but one class, as far as concerns the matter now before us, viz. that of those who despise or lightly regard ecclesiastical authority and Christian unity, the claims of an apostolical episcopacy, the Divine commission of the Christian priesthood; who neglect the guidance of their appointed pastors, put no faith in their exclusive importance as the ministers and stewards of God's holy mysteries, and, by a chain of consequences as necessary as it is deplorable, degrade the Sacraments themselves to a corresponding level.—The Revival of Popery, by Dr. Faussit, 3rd edition, p. 10.

7.—*Authority.*

While they thus undervalue the authority and importance of the Church, they as proudly exalt their own, claiming the unlimited exercise of private judgment in the interpretation of Scripture, and maintaining the undoubted capacity for such judgment in all ordinary Christians.—Ibid.

Amid all the errors and corruptions of Popery, enormous as they are, she has not absolutely failed to retain a portion of truth: and this truth, abused though it be in her hands to the

purposes of sacerdotal influence, and disguised and distorted by superstition, is precisely that which, when skilfully displayed, is calculated to put to shame and confusion the impugners of ecclesiastical authority, the despisers of the ministerial function, and the desecrators of the Sacraments. In fact, the arrogant claims to independent judgment in religious matters, however vaunted in theory, are ever repudiated by the general practice of mankind, and are utterly inconsistent with the wants and weaknesses of our common nature.—Ibid., p. 11.

For the great bulk of the community, authority of some description or other is their sole dependence.—Ibid.

With regard to the traditions of the Church, as an authority distinct from Holy Scripture. . . . suffice it to say, that within due limits, and on certain subjects, and in legitimate subordination to inspired truth, the principle is not merely useful but necessary, being dangerous only by excess or abuse, or when not scrupulously disengaged from those polluted channels, in exploring which extreme distrust is natural, and extreme caution indispensable.—Ibid., p. 16.

8.—*Authority.*

The true line taken by our Church appears to be this.—she knows nothing of tradition as an independent rule of faith; but genuine and primitive tradition she anxiously seeks to discover, and when found she honours, not indeed as a rival mistress, but as the faithful handmaid of Scripture.—Conybeare's Bampton Lectures, Lect. I. p. 7.

Note on the above passage.—Waterland has excellently expressed this sentiment: "Antiquity ought to attend as an handmaid to Scripture, to wait upon her as her mistress, and to observe her; to keep off intruders from making too bold with her, and to discourage strangers from misrepresenting her."

I regard Scriptural authority as the sole foundation of the fabric of our faith, but the study of Christian antiquity as one of the supporting buttresses on which its stability most materially depends.—Lecture VIII. p. 366.

9.—*Succession.*

It thus appears that those churches in which episcopacy has been established may be as sure as under the circumstances of the case it is possible to be, that they have followed the mind of the Lord by following the example of his apostles in the form of their religious government. Those pastors, therefore, who have received their authority to exercise the sacred ministry in such episcopal churches, are clearly, so far as their external calling is concerned, to be reckoned among the legitimate successors of the apostles in the ministerial office. . . . .

Now this is a privilege to which the Church of England and its ministers can most assuredly lay claim. It is not only constituted according to the apostolic model, but it has enjoyed that blessing by an unbroken succession from the earliest times. There is no one that can tell us when we were interrupted in the regular transmission of the ministerial authority from hand to hand.—Rev. C. Benson, Master of the Temple, on Tradition and Episcopacy, p. 88.

Upon the same ground may those who undertake to supply the manifest insufficiency of the ordinary and appointed ministers of Christian instruction in a land hope that their efforts will not be condemned or unassisted by the heavenly Master whose services they have assumed. But when there is no want of regular and faithful ministers, those who are not duly admitted into that number can have no pretence for intruding; and, even where a deficiency exists, they must rest their hope rather on the general mercies of the Lord to those who promote his glory and proclaim his truth, than on that special promise which was here (Matt. xxviii. 18-20) uttered to the apostles and those who should succeed them.—Ibid., p. 63.

10.—*Succession.*

For these obvious reasons (and abundance of others might be adduced) it would seem to be self-evident that the form of Church government which our own country retained, when, together with a large portion of Europe, she threw off the yoke

of the Church of Rome, is immeasurably the safest. All that can be said of other modes of discipline is that they may be right. Of our own it appears certain that, at all events, it is right. Our Saviour, indeed, has declared generally that, where two or three are gathered together in his name, there he is in the midst of them: and this declaration may, I admit, be quoted, as affording a probable sanction to other modes of Church discipline than our own, when adopted upon conscientious principles. It is accordingly under the authority of this text that I am inclined to hope that the assemblies of those other denominations of Christians, who, from no love of schism, but from a sincere wish to approximate nearer to the simplicity of the primitive ages, have seceded from our community, will find favour in his sight.—Not Tradition, but Scripture, by Dr. Shuttleworth, p. 129.

11.—*Succession.*

It has been shown, that in apostolic times none but apostles ordained; and that in succeeding times none but the members of the episcopal order were permitted to ordain. It will not be denied that ordination is the means by which the succession is secured. It follows then, as a necessary consequence, that there can be no apostolical succession but through the episcopal order.

I urge then the inquiry, can churches which have no bishops claim to be considered as apostolical institutions, to be constructed upon the primitive or apostolic model, or to have any, the slightest, connection by ecclesiastical descent with the Church originally planted and arranged by the Saviour?—Boyd on Episcopacy, Letter iii. p. 158.

In p. 312 of this volume the Oxford Tracts and their writers are severely censured and disclaimed.

12.—*Succession.*

I love and value the apostolical succession as a certain and undoubted channel of God's love and mercy to the Church;

but when I remember that the apostolical succession has taught error, I dare not say it is the sole, only, exclusive channel of grace, and affirm that none of the Lutheran or Calvinistic Churches have ever partaken truly of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.—The Doctrine of the Atonement to be taught without Reserve, by the Rev. Geo. Townsend, 1838, p. 16, note.

I believe, I again reply, in the apostolical succession as one undoubted evidence of the descent of Christianity, and as a means of grace to mankind.—Ibid., p. 37, note.

The Church of England is the maintainer of truth, protesting equally against Puritanism as one extreme, and Popery as the opposite.—Ibid., p. 56.

13.—*Authority.*

"The writer of this discourse, having been requested by his diocesan and the assembled clergy to commit it to the press, feels bound to take the opportunity of publishing his protest against the tendency of a series of works entitled 'Tracts for the Times.'"—Advertisement, p. iii., to the following sermon.

And this is true, not only of oral tradition, but also of written tradition, which, as far as it is the record of primitive practices and primitive opinions, may seem to have some better claim to our respect, and which is indeed most valuable in its proper place and for its proper use. But then it is not its proper place to be put on a par with the inspired word of God. It is not its proper use to be appealed to as an infallible test of divine truth. It is auxiliary to Scripture, not as holding the same rank, but in due subordination; not as imparting light direct from heaven, but as a medium through which the heavenly light may often be seen to most advantage; not as a tributary stream to the fountain of revealed truth, but as the channel through which that fountain has flowed down to us, and through which we are enabled to trace up the lifegiving waters to their pure and perfect source.—Sermon preached at the Visitation of the Bishop of Chester, by the Rev. C. Girdlestone, 1838, p. 16.

III.

I add a few incidental notices from the works of persons separated from the Church.

1. Neal, in his History of the Puritans, says, upon the year 1559, "It was thought necessary to maintain this (viz., 'that the Church of Rome was a true Church,' and 'the Pope a true Bishop of Rome'), for the support of the character of our bishops, who could not otherwise derive their succession from the apostles."

2. "The Popery that has been recently making its appearance in the English Church is, perhaps, after all, no more than the following out of certain previously existing principles in its standards to their legitimate conclusions; and, it is to be hoped, will have no other effect than that of inspiring disgust, and so promoting dissent, and of suggesting the inquiry, how far a Church is entitled to be supported as Protestant that is harbouring in its bosom doctrines which have been hailed by Romanists as a near approximation to themselves, and which is thus showing favour to the very system of which it was the supplanter and the substitute."—Wardlaw's Lectures on Establishments, p. 384.

3. "Let us come down to the boasted era of that Henry's royal and Protestant daughter, Elizabeth, when by a statute (the first of her reign, if I remember correctly) the first four general councils were solemnly constituted the theological law of England; and this great country—"great, glorious, and free," as it has been customary in all time to regard her—was constrained to accept of her Christian liberties at the hands of the fathers of her reformation, with the condition annexed of acknowledging for Gospel, and recognising as the tests of their so-called heresy, the doctrines of these councils."—Three Discourses before the Unitarian congregation of Lewin Mead

Chapel, Bristol, by Mr. Armstrong, formerly incumbent of Bangor, Diocese of Down and Connor, 1838, p. 62.

"Grecian sciolism, Roman ambition, and, worst of all, the ambiguous reformation of England."—Ibid., p 77.

"Opinions . . . only not Romish because they are not held in formal connection with Rome."—Ibid., p. 78.

4. "This state machine has been working off and putting into circulation error and falsehood in almost all their forms. Even now, eight out of its ten thousand ministers are busily disseminating another gospel; and, instead of pure Christianity, are spreading something little better than the deadly superstition of the past."—The Voluntary System, a Prize Essay, by Mr. J. Angus, 1839, adjudged by Dr. Raffles, Dr. Pye Smith, and Mr. William Tooke.

The Rev. Mr. Gordon, of Greyfriars Parish, Aberdeen, published a Sermon in 1839, "occasioned by the Second Centenary of the Second Reformation," effected by the proceedings of the Assembly in 1638, which altered the ecclesiastical constitution of Scotland from episcopacy to presbyterianism (Aberdeen, 1839). The title given to this change was not used, I am sure, offensively by this gentleman, nor is the application of it at all peculiar to him. The Scottish Guardian of December 21, 1838, contains an account of the proceedings of 1638, which was circulated, it appears, in order to inform the public mind upon the subject previously to the celebration itself in Glasgow, and in which it is stated that, in the Liturgy drawn up at that time for Scotland, "the worst errors and most obnoxious ceremonials of Popery were revived, the book being an almost literal and undisguised transcript of the Roman missals." And one of the speakers at a very crowded contemporaneous meeting in Edinburgh gave an account of the Romish doctrines which he stated to have been held by Archbishop Laud and his friends, as follows:—

"It deserves to be remembered that before this period (1637), Laud, Pocklington, and others of that school, had

published sentiments, both on doctrinal and ecclesiastical points, very similar to, if not worse than, those which are now emanating from an English university, and well known by the designation of 'Oxford Popery.' They not only taught the grossest Armenianism, but showed, in every possible way, their leanings towards Popery. They denied that the Pope was the Antichrist of Scripture, maintained that he was the successor of St. Peter, and held that it would be nothing to the disadvantage of England to submit to his jurisdiction, as they did in France and Spain—always providing that his Grace of Canterbury should be patriarch of the British islands. They openly inculcated the adoration of the altar, of the communion elements, of images, relics, and crucifixes; they condemned the Reformation in England as having been rash and indiscreet; they vindicated Purgatory and prayers for the dead, the invocation of the Virgin and of saints, and in short held the Sacrament of the Supper to be a true sacrifice, in which the body and blood of Christ were offered by the priest."—Report (taken in short-hand) of the Edinburgh Commemoration Meeting, Dec. 20, 1838, p. 31. The speaker was the Rev. Thomas M'Crie, son, I believe, of an historian!

I will only further cite the sentiments of a late Presbyterian divine, I believe always admired not less for his moderation than for his piety and talents.

"Some attempts have lately been made to hold out to the public what is called 'an Episcopal Church of Scotland.' Whatever indulgence may be due to Episcopal Dissenters (and the Established Church has given sufficient countenance to the indulgence they have received), it is not to be forgotten that such a designation is an unwarrantable and illegal assumption, directly opposed to the fundamental laws of the land, and to the unalterable conditions of the treaty of Union."—Life of Erskine, by the Rev. Sir Henry Moncreiff, Bart., 1818.

C.—Page 392.

The Rev. R. Newcome, warden of Ruthin, published in 1825 a memoir of Dr. Godfrey Goodman, the Bishop of Gloucester. It appears to me that he is untruly described as an apostate to the Church of Rome. It seems very much more probable that he was a person who abstractedly preferred the Church of Rome as a whole, but did not think himself entitled to depart from the pale of that portion of the Catholic Church in which his lot had been actually cast. He does not, however, appear to have been a man of a very deep or reflective mind, and he seems to have wavered a little from time to time. He was educated at Cambridge, and was a client of the Lord Keeper Williams, the rival of Laud. He refused to subscribe the canons of 1640, according to Laud, on account of the canon against the Papists. It appears, however, that Laud proceeded against him with vigour and even harshness, for he at once suspended him, "with consent of the synod." He was afterwards prevailed upon to subscribe, but was put into confinement, from apprehension that he intended to quit the realm. He appears to have been a benevolent and pious man. The following passages seem worth extracting:—

1. His description of two parishes once under his care.—"In neither of my parishes (I praise God for it) I had, 1°, not a beggar; 2°, not an alehouse; 3°, not a suit in law; 4°, not a quarrel; 5°, not a spendthrift; 6°, no labouring man ever wanted a day's work; 7°, on the Sunday no poor man dined at his own house, but was ever invited; 8°, no man was ever presented for fornication, or any great crime; 9°, no murder, robbery, or felony, ever committed in the parish; 10°, no man ever came to a violent death; 11°, I never had any houses burnt in my parish; 12°, I never had two men that died of the plague in my parishes, until Mr. Newbery had his sequestration, &c."—Newcome, Appendix T.

2. Concerning the Churches of England and Rome.—"My Lord Bishop said then to Hanmer (as I have often heard his

Lordship speak to the same effect), 'You can truly say no more than this: In many things the religion of England is more remiss than that of Rome, but Catholic it is.'"—Ibid., Appendix O.

And from his will.—"I die most constant in all the articles of our Christian faith, and in all the doctrine of God's Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, whereof I do acknowledge the Church of Rome to be the mother Church; and I do verily believe that no other Church hath any salvation in it, but only so far as it concurs with the faith of the Church of Rome."

It is quite clear, from many passages, that he viewed the Church of England as Catholic, as well as from that above cited. Among others, he prays God in his will, "to send times of peace and quietness in this Church, and to restore her to her just revenues and honour." The case is one of interest in itself, and likewise of some historical importance.

THE END.

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